

welcome, then, this opportunity to give up something for the reconstruction of my people? I pray to God that I be strong enough to resist all temptation to accept a salary from the Center.

I am helped very much in this struggle against the desire for greater comfort by Dr. Benderly. His idealism is a spur to me to make the sacrifice for the good of the Jewish cause. On the other hand, J.H. Cohen while not exactly opposing my better promptings, does nothing to encourage them. When I asked him last Tisha B'Ab for a reason for his attitude, he replied that if I were to serve as rabbi without a salary my relation to the Center would be like that of a man who lived with a woman to whom he was not married.

* * * *

Wednesday, July 24, 1918

I am spending this summer with my family at New Rochelle (4 Manor Pl, Rochelle Park.) Though there are a good many Jewish families in New Rochelle - about three hundred at least - the only institutions of a ~~Jewish~~ ^{Jewish} character are two synagogues, a Y.M.H.A. and a shochet. The orthodox synagogue where I attend services on Saturday morning is a small wooden rickety building in an alley. The services are noisy and disorderly, the people unkempt and quarrelsome. The Reform synagogue has services only on Friday nights. Its rabbi is a young man - Richard Stern - who was dismissed from the Seminary about eight years ago because he did not conform to the dietary laws and openly violated the Sabbath. He was at that time a student of the Junior class. He had no Jewish background when he entered the Seminary - in fact, as he said to me the other day, when he came to visit me, he had never heard of "trefa" before he was fourteen. He was apparently anxious to take up the rabbinic career as is evident from the fact that he continued his studies with Arnold B. Ehrlich whom he paid \$60 a month for daily tuition. He was

electd rabbi by the New Rochelle Temple about seven years ago, Although the members (when then numbered 30) knew that he had not received a rabbinic training. His congregation now numbers 112 families. When I said to him that the reason for his not having services on Saturday was probably that his members had to go to work he replied, "Not all. Many of them play golf, and the women go shopping" and then added "The Lord can get along without services on Saturday morning." This is a rabbi! Yet I am sure that even a fellow like that could have been a positive influence for Judaism if the right kind of influence were brought to bear upon him. In the course of a two hours' conversation, I succeeded in getting him to realize that he did not begin to understand Zionism which, as an ardent disciple of Schulman, he had violently opposed.

The Y.M.H.A building which I happened to come across as I was taking a walk is a very fine structure. When I saw it I rejoiced that Jewish life seemed to have some chance of holding out in New Rochelle. But I soon learned that the directors of the institution had decided to turn it over to the government for war work of some kind. Later on I was informed that it was too small for government purposes and was therefore not accepted. The directors then turned it over to the Jewish Welfare Board for the Jewish soldiers in Ft. Slocum. How eager those Y.M.H.A. Jews seem to be to get rid of their Jewish responsibilities which haunt them much to their annoyance!

I used the deterioration of the New Rochelle Y.M.H.A. as a text in a talk that I gave last week (Tues., July 16, 11:30 A.M.) to a group of Jewish social workers. I pointed ^{that out} ~~xxxxxx~~ as the inevitable consequence of the lack of Jewish policy characteristic of Y.M.H.A.s. In contrasting the Y.M.C.A. with the Y.M.H.A. I pointed out that the former was a movement while the latter began as a society or group of societies. The Y.M.C.A. represented a second stage in the adjustment of Christianity to modern life. Protestantism represented the nationalization of Christianity; the Y.M.C.A. the socialization of it. In socializ-

ing Christianity the Y.M.C.A. looked for a common platform upon which the various Protestant sects might unite and it found it in the homage to the personality of Jesus. I urged that the Y.M.H.A. could also become a religious movement if it would adopt the fealty to the Jewish people and faith in the Jewish consciousness as the common basis for the different classes of believing Jews.

Last Wednesday night I attended Tisha B'Ab services at the Center. I spoke on the significance of the Fast. Making use of the analogy given in the Midrash between the career of Adam and that of Israel, both careers ending in the tragedy of expulsion, I made the point that Israel's failure was representative of the world's failure. The original sin of man - arrogance and lust for power - is the cause of the world reciting anew the Lamentation over Belgium, Servia and Armenia, etc.

* * * *

Tuesday, August 14, 1918

Last Thursday night (Aug. 9) a number of members of the Center who live in and about Far Rockaway met on the porch of Schwartz's cottage. J.H. Cohen had told me beforehand that at a previous meeting he brought up the question of attendance on the High Holidays. This year the holidays come very early, at a time when nearly all of the members are still in their summer resorts. The possibility of having the synagogue more than half empty is by no means a remote one. Cohen in his tireless zeal for the Center could not contemplate such a possibility, so he had a meeting called for the purpose of urging the members to come into town for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. After considerable persuasion they consented to come only for Yom Kippur. He was not satisfied, however, with the spirit in which their consent was won. He wanted more. He wanted them actually to want to come. He therefore arranged for the meeting of Thursday night and summoned me to advance reasons for their coming into town.

By no means all who might have come showed up. The attitude of the greater part of the membership toward the Center is that of icy indifference. The men are busy making money and the women spending it, and they have no taste for the intangible realities which the Center is to further. I am sending Miss Aaronson to make a canvass of the situation in order to have something to go by in organizing the work for the coming year and from her reports I gather that the Center holds little more than their marginal interest. Very rarely do the women reply to my request to make an appointment with Miss Aaronson and when she finally succeeds in being admitted to the presence of their highnesses, they make her feel as though she was intruding upon their important business of going to whist parties or automobiling.

Thank God, that I am now practically committed to the plan of having them contribute to the Teachers Institute \$5000 annually instead of paying me as they had intended \$6000 a year salary. I can afford now to be charitable with them. I feel that I am patient with their crass materialism not because I am being paid for it, but because I am serving the Jewish Cause. They can be the veriest roughnecks now, as far as I am concerned, the more reason for my loving the good that is dormant in them. But if I were to love them at so much per I would despise myself.

In urging upon them the importance of coming into town I pointed out to them that now the real work of welding them into a community was to begin. Hitherto they have been detached individuals. Now they are to constitute an organism. The services on the holidays were a most important means. To neglect the opportunity presented by the High Holidays would react fatally upon the growth of the organization. I also pointed out that centralization as against the centrifugal influence of the "Bamoth" was as necessary now as it was in ancient times. The institution of the pilgrimage has to be revived in the case of communities

that spend at least one third of the year away from town.

Last Saturday I attended services at the Far Rockaway synagogue where Magnes preached on the kehillah and appealed for funds. The attendance was slim - 250 persons in all - and the response far from what it to have been. About \$5000 was realized. Men who could have put down their names for \$1000 a year in many cases did not offer more than \$50. The same men who immediately after persistently refusing to yield to the request of those who solicited from them to subscribe more, were discussing what kind of a Cadillac Limousine they were going to buy during the coming week.

How marvellous the persistence and optimism of Benderly who is the prime mover in this attempt to build up a kehillah! How he keeps steadily at Magnes urging him on from task to task. Were it not for him Magnes would not only have resigned from the Kehillah but would have given up Jewish work entirely. Benderly is, I may say without any exaggeration, the sole constructive force in American Jewish life outside of Zionism. And the humility and self-effacement of the man! If we had five such men the Jewish future in the Diaspora would be assured. He has been and is to me the greatest inspiration in working for the Jewish cause. I do not know what I would have done without him. Rather I do know. I would have done anything in the world except work for the Jewish Cause which would then have appeared to me as hopelessly lost - so far as the Diaspora is concerned and what would Zionism have amounted to without provisional Jewish life for a generation or two in the Diaspora?

During the summer I moved with my family from 120 E. 93 St. where we had lived for seven years, to 1 West 89 St. so as to be within easy walking distance from the Center.

Tuesday
~~Monday~~, September 17, 1918 (5678 6820 36510)

The following are some of the types in Jewish life I have met or heard of recently: As J. H. Cohen was in the office of the Center poring over the chart of the synagogue there came in a man who asked him whether he was the sexton and explained that he was a manufacturer of synagogue and church fixtures. When Cohen told him he was not the sexton, the man noticing the chart asked whether the seats in the synagogue were being rented, and what was the price charged.

"We don't rent out any seats," said Cohen. "We give them to those who live in the neighborhood."

"If so let me have a few."

"Where do you live," asked Cohen.

"On Central Park West corner of 84 St." (no rents less than \$2500)

"We will let you have as many seats as you want but on one condition, that you attend the greater part of the services on the High Holidays," Cohen replied.

"Oh, I can't do that. I can come in only for an hour or so."

Cohen and Fischman were busily engaged in the problem of distributing the "Mitzvoth," when a man came in who said that he represented the 79 St. congregation on the West Side (a little Hevra of which I had never heard.) He came to tell them that they must stop giving out seats for nothing. They were ~~ruining~~ ruining his congregation, because many who would have rented seats for the holidays preferred to go to the Center where they got them free.

"Why did you not come sooner?" said Cohen. "It is Erev Rosh Hashono and the seats have already been distributed. We never realized that we were hurting the interests of any congregation." Of course this was only a clever way of putting the man off.

The congregation which is particularly bitter against the Center is the Pincus Elijah on W. 95 St. of which Minkin is rabbi. Some of the leading members of the Center, when they moved into the West side of the City, not finding any other synagogue in that part of the city that maintained the traditional ritual, attended that one. But it never occurred to them to affiliate themselves permanently with the Pincus Elijah congregation because it had nothing to give them besides the opportunity to worship in the traditional way. The building is so small in size and the people so small in mind that no social or cultural activities could be organized there. Cohen and Fischman began agitating for a Center as soon as they began worshipping in the P.E. synagogue. But, of course, as long as they were there they contributed liberally toward the maintenance of the synagogue. As soon as the Center was completed sufficiently for ~~xxx~~ activities to begin there Cohen and his friends left the Pincus Elijah synagogue. This diminished the income of the P.E. congregation. While it is possible to excuse the resentment of the directors of the congregation, there can be reason for Minkin taking the antagonistic stand he has assumed toward the Center, attacking it in season and out of season. He assumed charge of the pulpit long after the Jewish Center was organized and plans for the building had been drawn up. By his attacks he only proves that he is the mouthpiece of the directors of the congregation, a kind of dog who barks at his master's command. To such tactics do our rabbis of today stoop, for no other reason than that they have to make a living out of their preaching. It is simply a case of getting in the big customers.

Minkin showed himself recently in his true colors at a meeting of the West Side Community house in which his people are interested. One of the most active workers in that organization has been a Mrs. Stoll whose husband became a member of the Center. Her becoming interested in the Center so infuriated Minkin that when the question arose as to her

candidacy for some office in the West Side Community Sisterhood, he arose and called for her resignation, because as member of the Center she had no right to belong to the Sisterhood. (I haven't heard Minkin's side of the case. This is what Mr. Stoll ^{told me} narrated.) The rest is also hers and may be highly colored, for all I know.

The chairman who presided at the meeting supported Minkin in his call for Mrs. Stoll's resignation, and holding the gavel in his hand he raised it aloft and said dramatically, "If I could use this gavel on the heads of the people of the Center I would do so."

One of the members of our Center is a man by the name of Isidore Blanner. He, together with his brother, who is also a member of the Center, are in the cloak and suit business. (Jewish hardware business.) I do not know much about their antecedents, but it seems that they came to this country as boys and by dint of ~~an~~ hard work as well as successful manipulation and sweating (probably) have made a lot of money. They keep their place of business open on W 5th but have a kosher home and have a Jewish teacher for their children. They have a very poor reputation in philanthropic circles. They pledged themselves some time ago to contribute to the Federation, but I have learned upon good authority, that they have not paid in yet. They have also shown themselves malingerers in their indebtedness to the Center. But all these are mere details. From the little contact that I have had with them I have noticed particularly this Isidore to be nothing if not faultfinding with whatever he would have to contribute anything toward. It is largely due to him that the Center was delayed in its construction. Every time a plan was submitted he had some fault to find.

Now this Isidore Blanner was to celebrate his son's Bar Mizvah last Sabbath (Sept. 14/18) Although he is affiliated with the Center he was going to celebrate the Bar Mitzvah out of town. It was only at
t

the instance of Fischman that he was induced to hold the celebration at the Center. Fischman went so far as to arrange for a caterer. All the work that Blanner^{un} did was to insist that the caterer should submit an estimate to him to pass upon. Sabbath morning came and the services were far advanced before Blanner^y showed up. He had to be telephoned for twice, and finally when he did arrive to 'ח' א' he stormed why he had been made to hurry. The first ח' א' he heard he responded to though it was not his turn. But he showed himself in the full glory of his wrath and vulgarity when the services were over without anyone announcing from the pulpit that everyone could make פ' א' in the auditorium. He raged and stormed at the indignity he suffered in having to call in the people himself.

It is indeed too bad that people like Blanner^y should have to be coddled and humored instead of disciplined. Not until the Center will be in a position to teach a vulgar crew like the Weinstains, Moskowitzs and Blanners and a few more to behave properly will it amount to anything in the community.

The Weinstains came into town for Yom Kippur not out of loyalty to the Center but as ⁺ incidentally inferred from the remarks of the younger one, because they had been submitted to a grilling experience in the Edgemere Synagogue where an appeal was made for funds ~~xxxxx~~ for the new synagogue recently built there. The one who made the appeal poured hot shot into them without mentioning them by name, but everybody knew that he meant them, for refusing to contribute a larger amount than they ^{had} ~~did~~ toward the building fund.

At the Yom Kippur services Max was given ח' א' but he refused to accept it thinking that he had deserved an ח' א' . The other Weinstein then found fault with Fischman for not having given

his brother an ~~יד~~ ^{יד}. Fischman replied that his brother came too late for an ~~יד~~ ^{יד} which is the truth.

It was nevertheless remarked that they behaved better ~~at~~ on the whole at the Yom Kippur services than might have been expected of them. They sat in the seat behind me, and from the few remarks that I interchanged with them I could see that if they were taken in hand and dealt with sympathetically something could be made out of them, if not directly, at least ~~through~~ through their children. A characteristic criticism was made by the older Weinstein who said that the Kol Nidre prayer was conducted improperly because no Torah was taken out, and who put no stock in the fact that, as I told him, the 85 St. congregation went through the ~~service~~ service without any one taking out the Torah. He condemned vigorously the 88 St. congregation for having an organ and women in the choir. Were it not for these reforms he would have worshipped there. So much does the man understand or is ~~he~~ interested in what I should like to see the Center achieve. This remark, by the way, he made to me immediately after an hour and half's talk on the aims and methods of the Center that I gave yesterday between Mussaph and Minha.

Another typical millionaire Jew who, thank God, does not belong to the Center is a man by the name Rubinstein. He is a member of the 85 Street congregation and was such at the time I was rabbi there. I know him from the time that I came to this country when the first apartment my parents lived in consisted of two rooms and an alcove. Rubinstein was our landlord and I often used to carry rent to him, \$10 per month. Already then he showed himself a cruel and heartless fish. I had very little to do with him in the course of my ministry. During the summer he stayed at Far Rockaway and therefore attends the synagogue in which my brother-in-law Max Rubin is practically the most active worker. Max told me about an interview he had with him lately. The Rockaway congregation is running on a ~~deficit~~ deficit. Max, together with ^{Lidz} ~~him~~, the president

of the congregation went to see him. After they succeeded in meeting him this is in substance what he said to them:

Monday
Saturday, September 23, 1918

"As far as coal is concerned you can't do without it. You have also to pay the interest on the mortgage. But as to other expenses you ought to cut them down."

"Wherein could we be more economical than we are at present?" they replied, "we can't afford to give the Rabbi and Hazan less than what we are giving them at present with the ~~xx~~ prices of food and other necessities soaring sky high."

"That's just the trouble," he said. "Why can't you get a Hazan for \$900 a year; and you can get along without a rabbi, if you will invite a different speaker for every Shabbos."

There is an aspect to synagogue activity that is seldom noted and that is the civilizing and socializing influence it has upon those that engage in it. I refer not to those who came over to this country when they were too old to find an outlet for their social instincts in the social and political life of this country. These took to synagogue activity as a duck to water, and had the same effect on the synagogue as pigs on a clean pond. They use the synagogue as a medium for the instincts of intrigue and politics that are latent in all people of energy. It is out of this type of men - those who arrived in this country when they were at least in the twenties that we have the presidents and trustees that are killing off one congregation after another.

Thursday
Monday, October 3, 1918

They exploit to their own advantage and sometimes in a very concrete business way the prestige they enjoy as the chosen leaders of Jewish religious ~~body~~ bodies. In order to maintain their position they play politics. They cater to every noisy reactionary in their respective

communities and they use the rabbis as the tools for the realization of their purposes. The rabbi who refuses to be a tool of his president has his life embittered by that worthy official. The rabbi who is his president's tool is hated and despised by those who are jealous of the president's influence and prestige.

But what I said about the synagogue having a socializing influence is true of those who came to this country while they were quite young. If they have achieved a competence it has usually been at the price of all social and communal interests. They lead as a rule a narrow and individualistic lives. But when through some circumstance they are interested in the establishment and development of a synagogue, they are entirely transformed. Such a change I have witnessed in my brother-in-law Max. Jake, on the other hand, had always been public spirited and it is at a great sacrifice that he is devoting much time and energy to the Central Jewish Institute. The fact is that those who take ^{an} interest in Jewish affairs are hardly in a position to accumulate wealth as the rest are who are similarly situated in the business world. It is a mighty expensive affair to take an active interest in Jewish life.

One does not have to take a leading part in Jewish life to find it to be an expensive affair. It is true that many of those who observe the Sabbath make plenty of money but withal that they forego the making of much more. So that if we ^{wish to} find the good points in our people we can find them readily without going far afield. Every Jew that observes the Sabbath, however, rude and spiritually undeveloped he may be otherwise, and God knows how rude most of them are, is to that extent an idealist. That same little Herschkowitz, a short statured, small minded, bleary-eyed blond young Jew who has everything that his heart desires, and but little sense except business shrewdness, told me the other day how bitterly he resented a telephone call that he had received on a Friday afternoon to come to see a new line of imported good. "We close our place of business

at 4:30" he replied. "But can't you come tomorrow," the other party who is a Russian Jew only about twelve years in this country. "We don't do any business on Saturday. With Yom Kippur falling on Monday we will keep our place closed till Tuesday," was H's answer. "But then you won't find anything left because it will be long sold out by that time," came the reply. And so it was. ^{and} thereby losing several hundred dollars.

The type of men that I described above as killing off one congregation after another ruled the destinies of the 85 St. congregation with which I was connected for over five years (1903-1909). When the proposition to build the institution that ultimately developed into the Central Jewish Institute came up - that was about 1912 - I strongly opposed having it ~~built~~ built by the congregation and urged that it be established as an independent institution. J. H. Cohen took an opposite stand at the time. But I now recall ~~it~~ distinctly my reason for the position that I then took. I was afraid that the powers that be of that time would cause the new institution to die an early death, as I was sure they would ultimately destroy the congregation. That congregation is at present rapidly disintegrating, all due to the fact that reactionary narrow minded and heartless men are permitted to be its trustees, whereas

Friday, October 4, 1918

the Central Jewish Institute is doing remarkable work in that it succeeds in drawing into Jewish life about three or four hundred families of small circumstanced people, like grocers, tailors and wage earners. The principal weakness of that work is that it is not self-supporting. The families that benefit by it contribute almost nothing to its support. Not before there will be in any of the more Americanized neighborhoods a group of Jewish families organized into a self sustaining spiritual community will it be possible to say that Judaism can exist in this country.

This is why I am so vitally interested in the Jewish Center. At present

I have nothing but a human detritus to deal with. The people of the Jewish Center have not - for the most part - the least conception of what the few of us like Cohen, Fischman and myself are trying to do with them. This is illustrated by their lack of interest in the religious school and kindergarten when I am trying to organize there. A number of them have private teachers for their children. These private teachers can hardly be expected to have little interest in the children except as a means to their earning a livelihood. Yet the parents are perfectly satisfied and pay no attention to the importance of making the school the most vitalizing activity of the Center if it is to achieve its ~~the~~ purpose. How wofully lacking our people have become in that instinct of social solidarity which was primary responsible for the maintenance of Jewish life hitherto! I see my task very clearly. If it is a task that is in keeping with what is best for the race it will be accomplished.

I have had occasion to catch a glimpse of the disintegration of Jewish life from quite a different angle. The mere fact that in a Jewry of two million there should not be a single interesting and intelligent Jewish weekly is sufficient evidence of the ebb of Jewish consciousness in this country. A few weeklies of which the Hebrew Standard is typical are essentially advertising organs that have some inane stuff in the way of articles and editorials that might give the sheet the appearance of a journalistic endeavor. For a number of years there has appeared a colorless weekly under the name of American Hebrew which had the backing of the uptown German Jews. As soon as a downtowner moved uptown and became a ~~trustee~~ trustee of an uptown congregation he became a subscriber to the American Hebrew. About a year or two ago it fell into the hands of a shrewd lawyer Edelberg who expected to make money out of it by engaging Herman Bernstein as editor. Neither Edelberg nor Bernstein is much interested in Jewish life or its problems. Bernstein has found a bigger field with the N.Y. Herald and his interest in the American Hebrew

lapsed. The result is that the American Hebrew ~~ifxx~~ is fast approaching bankruptcy.

A similar fate is hanging over the American Jewish ~~Chronicle~~ Chronicle - a paper of quite a different sort. It was established about two years ago by one of those rare idealists that now and then appear in Jewish life. Dr. Strauss who was its original publisher is, from what I have heard about him, a highly intellectual man of the species "practical idealist." As a result of Prof. Gottheil's machinations he was interned as an enemy alien. The Jewish Chronicle is without funds and without advertising and unless something be done immediately it will be discontinued. There is a possibility of Schiff saving it. But what will then become of its intensely Jewish and outspoken attitude? If it will continue to exist it will probably have to degenerate into a wishy washy sheet and be used for Americanization and the particular political purpose of its backers, something like the "Jewish World" of about a decade ago - a Yiddish daily fathered by the Uptown German Jews to make Republicans out of the benighted East Siders.

The formal opening of the Seminary last Tuesday (Oct. 1) was another of those useless ceremonies that eat into people's time and energy. Adler repeated the remarks he had made at the opening of the preceding year - something about not being slouchy. After that he called upon Rabbi Nowak who gave us an itemized statement of how he spent a day at the School for Chaplains. He then called upon me to make some remarks about religious schools. Being called upon unaware, I talked at random feeling my way from sentence to sentence. One can imagine how edifying my remarks must have been. At the conclusion of this intellectual report came Mr. Marshal. He is served up at the end of every Seminary occasion as regularly as coffee at the conclusion of every meal. He was not quite as full of thunder as usual, although he

exhibited enough of the American Yanker and little enough comprehension of the position of the rabbi in the American community to make him a worthy president of an archaeological institution like the Seminary. Instead of any of the speakers suggesting in the slightest degree the significance of the calling upon which many of the students were then entering, every allusion to the rabbinical calling and to the work of preaching was one of ridicule. Marshall concluded his remarks with his son's comment upon the pulpit to the effect that a trap door ought to be invented whereby at a given signal the rabbi could be made to disappear after speaking for about fifteen or twenty minutes. He represented the rabbi as looking upon the layman from above down and he illustrated his statement by the fact that a year ago a prominent rabbi in this city whom he described as a scholar and orator, dared to take him to task for reminding the rabbis to do their duty in the matter of the liberty loan. I was myself present at the altercation that Marshall referred to and I recall the "Huzpah" with which he attacked the failure of the rabbis present to do their share towards furthering the Liberty loan. Schulman took him to task and rightly so, for not having uttered a syllable of protest against Magnes, who is his brother-in-law, and who had come out openly against the government.

* * * * *

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1918

This morning at 6 A.M. (N.Y. time) the Great World War came to an end.

As an insignificant sheltered spectator of this greatest of the world's tragedies, I have no right to say a word. Filled with bitterness and hate as my heart usually is against those who exploit their fellowmen, I did not know when the war broke out, whom to hate and curse more, the Germans ^{our} with their arrogance and insolence or the Russians with their cruelty and superstition, or the capitalists of

Yet I could not warm up to the suggestion that immediate steps be taken to bring about that organization. It is partly due, I presume, to my inability to work together with a man like Kohn. He has a vigorous mind, but he is too much of a dialectician to be a realist. He is still obsessed by the hypnotic influence of concepts like revelation, law, etc., though I noted a remarkable change in him since I last spoke to him about the subject. There was much less of that obsession and he was somewhat less dogmatic in his statements than he had been on previous occasions. He will have to cast off a great deal more of the spell before he and I will be able to work out anything in common. On the other hand, I suppose, I must admit that I too am dogmatic in my way, and unless I could carry out my wishes to the full, I would not be satisfied. I see no reason why I should make compromises with Kohn or anybody else rather than with the existing conditions. If I am to launch out on a spiritual adventure I do not want to be hampered by a sense of yielding and compromise.

I did not feel, however, that it would be right or consistent on my part to turn them down altogether, and I therefore resorted to dilatory measures. I proposed that we should first come to an understanding among ourselves. Such an understanding implied more than an agreement upon general principles. Those principles must be applied to such concrete problems as those of Biblical criticism, criteria of authority, Sabbath observance, etc. In the discussion that followed it developed that Kohn and I differed in two important respects, one theoretic and the other practical. In revising the law he would not go back to the antecedents of the law for the determination of its spirit and function, whereas I maintained that we have no right to stop arbitrarily at any point to determine the spirit and function of a law. We should avail ourselves for that

purpose even of the results of anthropological research whenever possible. Another difference of opinion arose as to the body that would have the right to give validity to any proposed change. I contended that the principle of having the ~~body~~ ^{body} give its sanction should be observed. No change could therefore be valid unless sanctioned by a body representative of the different Jewries of the world. Kohn took the stand that there is no need for such a body. It is sufficient to have American Jewry represented.

I talked the matter over with Dr. Kotkov whom I learned to know last year. He is a man of extraordinary mental acumen, knowledge and character. I ~~hardly~~ ^{hardly} think he is ~~thirty~~, but such is his wide reading and understanding of human life that I would not hesitate to take his advice on a matter like the preceding. He expressed his opinion that it would not be wise to start out with the formulations of platforms. A book setting forth what course Judaism should take in this country would be much more effective both in undermining the intransigence of those that are in control now and help to build up the new order; whereas a platform with an organization would strengthen the resistance of the very forces that should be overthrown if Judaism is to live.

It was a most stimulating evening that I spent with Kotkov last night. Perhaps it was because he agreed with me in some of the more radical suggestions that I ventured to throw out. Anyhow such agreement I am sure was not due to the fact that he had not a mind of his own. No one could suspect Kotkov of that. It is rather the result of his having had a good psychological and sociological training in Chicago University which makes it possible for him to liberate himself from the bondage of conceptual thinking, and to regard all mooted problems from the standpoint of function. When, therefore, I suggested that if Judaism is to survive in the Diaspora, it must abandon its uncompromising attitude toward the Sabbath

and by an act of will adopt Sunday as the Seventh Day, he not only was not shocked, but even admitted that such a change will have to come in time. But it must come as a result of a gradual leavening process to be initiated by writing and not by organization.

Kotkov recently got his doctorate at Dropsie College on a thesis in which he worked out a key to the Zohar and Kabbalah in general. He certainly deserves far more credit for a piece of work like that than if he had edited some stupid Genizah fragments.

Ever since Palestine began to be spoken of seriously as a homeland for the Jews - which means of course, since the British Declaration - my longing for Palestine has been growing in intensity. I actually yearn to settle there with my family. This led me to inquire of the Zionist office in the city whether there could be found an opening for me whereby I could earn a livelihood for myself and family. DeHaas who is the executive director of the Zionist Organization asked me to come to see him. I was to his house last Wednesday (Dec. 25) and he suggested the possibility of my going on a commission to report on the educational situation in Palestine for the purpose of advising the organization on the apportionment of its subvention of the educational work there. The mere hope of my beholding the land of my people has put new life into me. May God grant that my hope be realized, and that my lot ultimately be cast among those who will help rebuild the ruins of our land.

Does this mean ingratitude to America? To love America is simply to love myself, for it is only in this blessed country that I could have achieved that which I most value in myself, relentless honesty of mind. The Jewish people gave me the problem to work on, but America gave me the means, the leisure and the freedom to understand the problem. If I will go to Palestine, it will be for the

purpose not only of helping to interpret my people to itself, but also of interpreting America to her own people. Very few of her own people understand her. The veil of Christianity is about them, obscuring their vision. It is only Judaism that will give purpose and direction to Americanism.

* * * *

Tuesday, January 7, 1919

Last Sunday I participated in the installation exercises of Elias L. Solomon as rabbi of the 85 St. congregation. Solomon was in my early years somewhat of a chum of mine, but we never shared intellectual interests. He is by temperament an easy going upholder of the status quo. He is good for women with "nerves," but as for those who experience in themselves something of the Great Unrest he is a mere cipher.

Like the "Sambation" of Jewish mythology, my soul is in a state of continual agitation. I am tortured by the restraints which prevent me from becoming an active participant in the Social Revolution which is in the air nowadays. As rabbi of the Jewish Center I am allied with the typical bourgeois Jews. I went into this alliance open eyed though with a great deal of reluctance and disgust. The only justification I could offer to myself for having affiliated myself with a class of people who for the most part belong to the class of exploiters is well expressed in the following which I came across the other day:

"Bernard Shaw once said that, under our present system, clergymen are nothing but chaplains of pirate ships. To which we may reply, 'Precisely so; and what ships have a greater need for chaplains?' I thank God that I can conscientiously subscribe to this statement in view of the fact that I draw no salary from the Jewish Center.

* * * *

Monday
Wednesday, July 28, 1919

I am really surprised at myself that I have held on to the Center so long. I suppose it is due to the fact that I am beginning to age and am commencing to realize that it is futile to measure one's strength against the world, especially when one's strength does not amount to much.

The spiritual progress made by the families affiliated with the Center has been very slight. The few children - there are about thirty of them - that attend the religious school are probably the only ones that benefited ^{from} the existence of the Center. Whether that is worth the forty-thousand dollars that it cost to maintain the Center during the last year is another question. It all depends, of course, from whose standpoint we are to consider the money spent. From the standpoint of the members, the least wealthy of whom spends \$10000 a year on his living expenses, and the one of average wealth \$20000 to \$30000, the sum of forty thousand dollars is by no means large. But from the standpoint of the general community which is so poverty stricken, the good that could have been done with that amount is such that one is bound to consider the use to which it was put an economic and spiritual waste. The only part of the money that was well spent was the five thousand dollars which the Center contributed in my name to the Teachers Institute.

As a matter of fact not very much could be expected from the experience with the Center. The part of the building which was to constitute the new element in the reconstructed synagogue was not yet built up. So far there is really little more to the Center than the conventional auditorium for worship together with one for dances and entertainment. From the way matters stood at the beginning of the year I was very much afraid that they would not go on with the rest of the building. My fear was based on the apathetic attitude of the trustees

Outside of ^{Joseph} H. Cohen and Fischman not a single one of the trustees has the slightest comprehension of what the Center is really meant to accomplish. To be a trustee simply means to have the "privilege" of paying a thousand dollars annually as membership dues instead of the ~~\$\$\$~~ \$200 to \$250 that the other members pay. When it was found that the running expenses of the Center could not be met with only twelve trustees they voted to add on six more.

On the other hand there are among the members a few, say four or five, who are genuinely interested in the Center. The question for me was how to manoeuvre so that these few members should be given an opportunity to become active in the furtherance of the general aims of the Center, especially in the completion of the building. I wrote up for the bulletin (Dec. 7, 1918) a statement in which I outlined a plan of organization whereby every member would be given a chance to take an interest in the work of the Center. I advised that the members who were not trustees should be organized into a House of Members, with a chairman of their own, and that the vice-chairman of each standing committee should be drawn from the general membership body, the chairman always being one of the Board of Trustees. Innocent as I was of any intention to wrest power from the trustees, J.H. Cohen strongly resented what ~~the~~ thought a move on my part and on the part of some of the members to make the trustees play second fiddle. This apprehension of his, I assume, was based on the fear that if the trustees be relegated to the background, the younger set would ultimately introduce reforms. Knowing as he does how anxious I am to introduce changes into the ritual, he suspects every move that I make.

The House of ^Members has by no means come up to my expectations. It has brought out two or three people who will contribute materially (I don't mean in a financial way) to the development of the Center. It is due to these few that the campaign for a loan for \$150,000 from the

members themselves was launched, and that it was finally decided to go on with the rest of the building. Contracts were placed some time ago and the other six stories are now in process of construction.

The following are the principal facts upon which I base my conclusion that the members of the Center are a very unpromising group spiritually:

1. At the beginning of this year some of the industries in which our people are interested were compelled as a result of strikes to shorten the number of laboring hours per week to forty-four. The time seemed ripe for a general movement to promote Sabbath observance by dividing the forty-four hours among five days instead of having the men work as hitherto, a half-day on Saturday. When the waist strike was on the point of being settled I made an attempt to introduce the five day week plan into the agreement that was about to be drawn up. I learned that a lawyer by the name Gordon represented the interests of the manufacturers. I went to see him, accompanied by J.H. Cohen. But no sooner did I see the man than I realized that my efforts with him would be in vain. He was far from reconciled to the idea of granting the workers the forty-four hour week, and was determined to fight them to the last ditch. With jaw firm and teeth set he hurled defiance at the workers with whom he said he was engaged in a bitter struggle. What cared he for Sabbath observance? He had no use for religion, anyhow. His father/^{who} was a religious man gave him an opportunity to see all that there was to religion, but failed to convince him that there was anything to it. I learned later that his father was the notorious firebug of the east side who was sentenced to seven years' prison in Sing Sing. I went away from the interview disheartened.

I then made arrangements for an open meeting to be held at the Center for the purpose of making propaganda for the five day a week idea. My purpose was to invite to the meeting as many of the leading manufacturers as possible, and to have Schiff, Magnes, Rosalsky and myself

address them on the Sabbath question. The meeting was called for Tuesday, Feb. 4. In order that the outcome of the meeting be of a practical character I urged that a group of manufacturers who so far have kept their places open on the Sabbath come together preparatory to the meeting on Feb. 4 and work out some resolution to be presented at that meeting. The moving spirit of this conference was to be R. Sadowsky, one of the wealthiest members of the Center. At the conference from which I was advised to stay away, Jewish and spiritual claims had no weight whatever, and no attempt was made to press them by Judge Rosalsky who was the only man there that could have done so. The main obstacle to their favoring the adoption of a five day week schedule was the fear that if they would distribute the forty-four hours among five days the workers would soon come to ask for a further reduction to forty hours. In the face of this difficulty there appeared no way for those men to favor the five day week scheme without prejudicing their material interests.

When the Tuesday night meeting took place, the members of the conference showed themselves benevolently neutral to the five day week plan that was warmly advocated by the speakers. A discordant note was struck by one "Col." Ginzberg who ranted some generalities about the efforts of what he called the "Jewish Church," to meddle in the labor problem. As far as I could see nothing of a positive character was accomplished. Schiff, who I hoped would take a leading part in the movement, refused to be troubled with it. Although the few who were anxious to see the cause of the Sabbath furthered congratulated themselves upon the successful meeting, we were no further than we were before.

In all this time I pinned my faith upon Sadowsky. About a few days after the meeting, I arranged for a conference at his house. This meeting was attended by J.H. Cohen, Rothstein and Fischman, all Sabbath observers. I was also present. I then realized that Sadowsky

was willing to take an interest in the movement only on one condition, and that is if the Jewish community would extend the scope of its activity to include the various phases of the labor problem. He felt that the community ought to step in and put a halt to the unreasonable demands of the workers. If he could get the general public interested in his troubles with his employees, he would consent to yield to the demand that he adopt the five day week. In other words he too could not be persuaded to take part in the movement to promote Sabbath for fear that it would soon bring about a forty hour week. With this my efforts on behalf of the Sabbath came to a halt. There was nothing further to be done that I could see.

2. The second factor that has contributed toward my conclusion with regard to the Center group has been the lack of response to my efforts to interest the members in Bible study that I conducted every Wednesday evening. I realized that I dealt not only with the T.B.M. (Tired Business man) but with one who had not the remotest interest in any of the questions connected with the study of the Bible. Various artificial stimuli were resorted to to keep up the attendance, coffee and cake were served after the lecture, members were telephoned to one or two days before each lecture; they seemed to be interested in what I said, yet when the weather was the least inclement not more than two or three people put in sight. I had the first part of the evening devoted to the rehearsal of the synagogue melodies, I changed the subject matter from Bible interpretation to History. I invited an outside speaker occasionally to talk ^{on} ~~in~~ a different problem, but all to no avail.

3. The young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty seemed entirely unapproachable. There was not the slightest manifestation on the part of any of them of any interest in Jewish history or religion. After herculean efforts to build up classes for young men

and young women. Kadushin, one of the teachers, succeeded in organizing a group of boys five of whom were sons of Center members.

4. Finally, the reaction of the people to my preaching. Most of my intellectual activity last year was spent upon the weekly sermons that I delivered at the Center. I succeeded practically each week in developing some striking idea and in making that idea popular. But from time to time I touched upon some of the vital political and economic questions and gave expression to views which I deemed both Jewish and just. Whenever I spoke in that vein I was accused of being a Bolshevik. Not that I am ashamed of being classed with the Bolsheviks. I would rather be classed with them than with the bourgeois profiteers. But what I object to in their charging me with Bolshevism is that such charge was to them a sufficient reason for not taking my views seriously. or analyzing them to see whether there was any truth to them. I had this experience with the series of sermons on Freedom that I delivered during the Passover season. A typical case was that of a wife of one of the members, a young woman in the thirties whose husband is just now growing rich on his investments in oil stock in Oklahoma. She complained to Miss Langer that she made up her mind to discontinue her attendance at the synagogue because of the type of sermon that I was delivering. The sermons so upset her nerves that she could not sleep nights on account of them. What truth there was in that statement I do not know but this report I got from Miss Langer who is the executive director of the Center.

With nothing left to preach or to teach and nothing that he can or dare change, what is there for the rabbi to do?

Toward the end of the year (beginning with March 29/19) I began conducting a class in Talmud at the Center for men who at one time or another had belonged to a "Hevra Shas." A man who attends a class of that kind has no ulterior purpose in the study of Talmud except the

satisfaction which is semi-religious in character of covering so many treatises of the Talmud. This desire is also semi-intellectual in character inasmuch as it entitles one to feel that he is no longer an "Am-Haarez." To take part in such study one must have developed a taste for Talmudic argumentation while still a child, and have kept up the study continuously. No one that is mature in years can acquire an interest in Talmudic study, so bizarre it is. A man like J. H. Cohen who would not omit any opportunity to saturate himself with Jewish thought and life tried again and again to become interested in the Talmud that we were studying, but had to give up. One can imagine, therefore, how entirely unrelated such a study is to the main activities at the Center. Yet I took it up for want of anything better to do and I spent five hours a week on it, besides other five hours spent incidentally thereto.

Toward the end of the ~~xxx~~ season I thought I would try the experiment in the pulpit of using the forum method. I was going to deliver a series of lectures on human nature intending to show how the knowledge of it is essential to the study and practice of ethics. On Saturday, May 3, I made my first attempt. It was enough to convince me that the intellectual calibre of my listeners was not ^Qadopted to the forum method and I gave it up at once.

If the inference that one might draw from all that I have to say of my work in the Center be that I am impatient of results and weak willed into the bargain, such an inference would probably be correct in the main. But there is one thing that I usually do. Knowing my weakness I fortify myself with social guarantees so that I should not throw up the sponge too readily. If I had not obligated myself to be the indirect cause of the ^{Teachers} Institute receiving support from the Center, I certainly would have thrown off the Center as a bad job. That was one, if not the principal motive of my tying myself to the Center in this peculiar fashion.

The worst part of the situation is that I cannot for a moment lose sight of the fact that my troubles at the Center are due to the general state of demoralization in Jewish life which is growing worse every year. This was brought home to me about a month or two ago when at Benderly's instance Friedlaender, Benderly and myself met with Magnes to consider the question of the Kehilla. Benderly's heroic attempt to re-organize the Kehilla on the district plan turned out a failure, as I apprehended it would. Magnes' main interest is in the socialist movement. He is a radical and a sympathizer with the Bolsheviki. He advocates the cause of radicalism from the public rostrum. He has incapacitated himself entirely for Jewish work as a result of his new interests. But instead of cutting his connections with Jewish work he hangs on. He is after all a sentimentalist and he has not the heart to spurn an old love of his. We came together to talk Kehilla. Friedlaender did not mince matters and told Magnes that he ought to get out. I could not be quite as brutal. I advocated a completely new plan of organization. After a lengthy discussion we met again. I then saw that Benderly was steering the whole affair with the view of convincing Magnes to remain the head of the Kehilla. The discussion petered out. Again a meeting and another meeting but with no result. A few days ago I heard of an informal conference called together by Sadowsky and Rosalsky to ask Magnes as to his intentions with regard to the Kehilla. He told them plainly that he was not the man to organize N. Y. Jewry. He advised them to get some business man to head the Kehilla in the same way as Felix M. Warburg heads the Federation. In the meantime I heard that Benderly has gone into some kind of business. When I last saw him he told me that he intended doing something of that kind, though he would not discontinue to do Jewish work. He told me then that all he needed for business was five hours a day. The rest of the time he would spend in furthering the new scheme he has in mind of establishing a chain of institutions like the

Central Jewish Institute throughout the city. He expects to interest Louis Marshall and get him to be the official head of the undertaking. I am afraid that he will be as little successful with this new scheme as with all of his schemes in the past. It occurs to me, that this mental make up as such disqualifies him for leadership in the Diaspora. He was born in Palestine, and it is only in modern Palestine that he might have succeeded. For the diaspora he lacks the religious note, which is only another name for that self-conscious Jewishness which a Jew in the Diaspora must possess if he wants to escape being absorbed by the environment. In the meantime the one man who I had hoped would hold out to the last has also surrendered. All this talk about his doing Jewish work in addition to his business duties is to me moonshine. If the Jewish community is in such a state that it has not enough work for a man like Benderly then it is in a mighty precarious condition from which a thousand tinkers like myself are powerless to save it.

At the graduation exercises of the Seminary which took place on Sunday, June 8, 1919 at the Aeolian Hall I was one of the speakers. For two years I was not wanted on the program, probably because of the indiscretion ~~indiscretion~~ I committed the last time I had spoken at the graduation exercises June 1916 (cf. p. 229). This year Dr. Adler was away from the country, helping Mr. Marshall in his efforts on behalf of Jewish rights in Eastern Europe. Ginzberg apparently had charge of the graduation. A few weeks before the graduation he asked me whether I would speak to the graduates of the Seminary and of the Institute. After thinking over the matter for a week, I accepted, being under the impression that I was to address the graduates of both institutions. Later on when I saw the invitations I found that Ginzberg himself was scheduled for that part, though when he spoke to me he implied that he would leave that duty to me, and that he would only make a few remarks. I was going

Central Jewish Institute throughout the city. He expects to interest Louis Marshall and get him to be the official head of the undertaking. I am afraid that he will be as little successful with this new scheme as with all of his schemes in the past. It occurs to me, that his mental make up as such disqualifies him for leadership in the Diaspora. He was born in Palestine, and it is only in modern Palestine that he might have succeeded. For the diaspora he lacks the religious note, which is only another name for that self-conscious Jewishness which a Jew in the Diaspora must possess if he wants to escape being absorbed by the environment. In the meantime the one man who I had hoped would hold out to the last has also surrendered. All this talk about his doing Jewish work in addition to his business duties is to me moonshine. If the Jewish community is in such a state that it has not enough work for a man like Benderly then it is in a mighty precarious condition from which a thousand tinkers like myself are powerless to save it.

At the graduation exercises of the Seminary which took place on Sunday, June 8, 1919 at the Aeolian Hall I was one of the speakers. For two years I was not wanted on the program, probably because of the indiscretion ~~indiscretion~~ I committed the last time I had spoken at the graduation exercises June 1916 (cf. p. 229). This year Dr. Adler was away from the country, helping Mr. Marshall in his efforts on behalf of Jewish rights in Eastern Europe. Ginzberg apparently had charge of the graduation. A few weeks before the graduation he asked me whether I would speak to the graduates of the Seminary and of the Institute. After thinking over the matter for a week, I accepted, being under the impression that I was to address the graduates of both institutions. Later on when I saw the invitations I found that Ginzberg himself was scheduled for that part, though when he spoke to me he implied that he would leave that duty to me, and that he would only make a few remarks. I was going

to back out, but I thought it best to ignore his pettiness and to do as I had been asked to do. The address is being issued by the Seminary this year together with the other addresses delivered on the occasion of the graduation.

During the last winter Jacob Kohn and Rubenowitz interviewed me several times in reference to launching the movement for a third party. Later on Greenstone, Lichter and Klein were added and we decided to call a conference of those whom we could count upon as being in sympathy with the idea. The date set was Wednesday June 18, immediately after the meetings of the United Synagogue and Alumni. A letter was drawn^{up} by Kohn and myself asking those who were dissatisfied with the present state of Judaism to come to the conference. The letter was signed by Friedlaender, Greenstone, Prof. ~~Marx~~^{Marx}, Margolis, Kohn, Rubenowitz and myself. I was asked to present a paper stating the purpose of our gathering.

The meeting was originally to have taken place at the Center but Jacob Kohn suggested that it be at the Seminary. I adopted the suggestion. A few days after the invitations were sent out, I received a letter from Ginzberg to whom I had sent an invitation, saying that as acting president he cannot allow the meeting to take place in the Seminary. He wrote a similar letter to Friedlaender. Prof. Marx wrote to Friedlaender strenuously protesting against launching the proposed movement, because it would create a new schism in Israel. The meeting was therefore shifted to the Y.M.H.A. building at 92 Street.

The meeting was well attended. In the discussion which followed my paper it became apparent that the time was far from ripe for any such undertaking. There were hardly any two men in the room that had the same point of view. That complete misunderstanding of one another is inevitable as long as there is no literature of constructive Jewish

thought. At one of the crucial votes that took place in the course of the meeting eighteen were progressives and twelve were standpasters. The progressives yielded in order not to break with the standpasters. The only outcome was the decision to have a committee of eleven draw up a definite plan of action which is to be presented at another general conference to be held in the fall.

In the meantime the whole matter has quieted down. Jacob Kohn maneuvered that Max Margolis should be temporary chairman. He is ~~an~~ therefore the man upon whom I am waiting to take further action. So far I have not heard a word from him.

This year I am summering with my family at Long Branch. I came both to get a rest and to lay the groundwork of a book on Judaism which I have been contemplating for a long time. I resolved not to yield to the request that usually comes from Mr. Garfunkel to deliver a sermon in the synagogue here at Long Branch. I had, however, to annul my resolution because Garfunkel came to me with the proposition that I make an appeal for the building of a communal center in place of a mere place for worship such as their synagogue is at present. Cantor Rosenblatt, probably one of the finest cantors we Jews have, promised to conduct the services. With my characteristic vacillation I tried to back out after I had promised to speak, but Garfunkel impressed upon me the fact that he had told a number of people including Jacob H. Schiff that I would speak, and it would embarrass him if I retracted my promise. I spoke last Saturday (July 26, 1919) and now that it is over I am not at all sorry. The movement to establish a Jewish center here is already afoot and I have all reason to believe that in the course of a year or so a Jewish Center in Long Branch will be a reality.

The services were not far advanced when there was already a crowd at the door clamoring for admission to hear Rosenblatt. Many

people ~~we~~ had to be turned away, something of which we rabbis are seldom the cause. Schiff came when the fifth man had been called up to the Torah. Garfunkel had told me the Sabbath before that Schiff said he would have to stop his automobile a block away from the synagogue, in order not to be seen leaving his automobile in front of the synagogue. Schiff was called up "Maftir" and he read the Haftorah as the entire congregation listened in admiration and surprise at the thought that one so wealthy and prominent should be able to read Hebrew. The remark that one could hear from a number of people was "If we only had a few more Schiffs Judaism would not be so badly off." The self-depreciation which this whole attitude betrays is only one of the many symptoms of our spiritual decay. (One of the criticisms of my sermon was that I should not have dilated so much upon the faults of our people in the presence of Mrs Schiff.)

~~Thursday~~ ^{Wednesday} July 29, 1919

My topic was "The Meaning of the Goluth." I pointed out that by the side of the idea of the "Geulah" Judaism lays great stress upon the idea of the Goluth. What Goluth means cannot be accurately defined because it is an emotional rather than an intellectual attitude, an attitude that is expressed by the minor key which is characteristic of Jewish music. Intellectually the Golus idea implies that one has not yet arrived. We note this idea running through the spiritual life of our people from the days of Abraham. In fact our people was in Golus even before it grew into a people. We were sojourners in another land before we had our own land. It was this Golus idea that ~~it~~ differentiated our migrations from the migrations of the rest of mankind. All humanity is in a state of transit, but it is impelled by blind unconscious forces. Not so Israel. If it wanders it is because of or in the name of an idea.

This sense of "Gelus" was kept alive until we were emancipated. The emancipation has broken us up into fragments, as a result of which we lost the sense of community. Losing that we lost the sense of Gelus. We began to feel that at last we arrived. Not only the assimilationists among us, but the observant Jews who reduced Judaism to a formalism which is kept distinct and apart from life. To counteract such formalism we have to reconstruct the synagogue and make of it a center of Jewish social life. This is especially true of the synagogue in our summer resorts; if they had been made into centers of Jewish life ^{it} would not be necessary to send our children to camps where they not only have to violate the dietary laws, but where they are out of touch with Jewish life at the most important part of the year from the standpoint of their spiritual development. I pointed out that a center established at Long Branch could reach in its activities which would by no means be confined to the Sabbath, the Jews of the various summer resorts all along the coast.

There are perhaps three or four families at the Center that would want the Center to provide them with opportunities for intellectual growth. Those are the families I would like to use as a lever by means of which to raise the tone of the rest of the people ^{who} ~~that~~ are affiliated with the institution. It is for that reason that I went to see last Wednesday, July 23, 1919, Mr. & Mrs. Spielberg who are stopping for the summer at the Palace Hotel at Edgemere. The first time I met them was one evening early in the winter as I was leaving the Teachers Institute. I saw them leaving the auditorium downstairs where they had attended a lecture on Pragmatism. Mrs. Spielberg introduced herself and her husband to me. They were returning home in their automobile and they asked me to join them. In the course of the ride I learned that she remembered me taking an active part in the work of a young people's society that was organized on the East Side by the

students of the Seminary, and that was known as the Jewish Endeavor Society. She was one of the members of that society. As those who belonged to the society were rather religiously inclined, I infer that as a girl she must have moved in religious surroundings. This is borne out by what I see of her now. Mr. Spielberg is a man of forty. He comes, I believe, from southern Russia, where as a child he received not only an intensive Hebrew training but also a secular training. He read German and Russian literature when still young. He began his career here as a cheap rate lawyer, so I am told. He meddled in politics and was for a time an assemblyman. His past does not seem to have won for him much respect among some of the older gentry at the Center.

He strikes me as an intellectual climber. In view of the fact that the majority of the Center are social climbers, it is certainly a relief to find a different type of climber. He and his wife have been in the habit for a number of years of attending courses in literature, psychoanalysis and other cultural subjects. They have picked up a good deal of information in this way, and have developed intellectual interests of quite a high order. Spiritually they are seekers. She would naturally feel inclined to settle down in some form of positive Jewish life, if it can only be rendered sufficiently intellectual and aesthetic. He on the other hand, is more of a spiritual rover. At present he has taken a fancy to ^{John Haynes} ~~Homes~~' new church. He evidently became a member at the Center at the request of his wife who wants to have her children brought up Jewishly. But he is very much displeased with the class of people at the Center.

Being anxious to introduce some cultural work into the Center next year I thought I ~~might~~ might get some suggestions from the Spielbergs as to the nature of the courses, and as to the lecturers that might be invited. This is why I went to visit them at the Palace Hotel. It is strictly "trepha." Mr. Spielberg would on principle refuse

to stop at one of the kosher hotels nearby. The conversation which lasted for more than two hours was in the nature of intellectual ~~skirmish~~ skirmish. He assumed at times an attitude of intellectual superiority, deploring the fact that I was out of place at the Center and that I was trying to revive dead issues. He fully realized, he said, that I was in a state of spiritual bondage. He was free, and was anxious to set me free. Of course I put up a strong fight, never losing my temper for a moment. My coming to see him, the promptness with which I came, the good nature I displayed throughout the discussion must have made a good impression upon him; and I believe I have driven a wedge into his icy apathy to Judaism. Will I have the time and patience to keep at him? I did not get from the interview what I came for, but it taught me the lesson that I cannot expect to achieve anything at the Center without a great deal of effort and persistence. If I were only sure that the human material at the Center was capable of being molded by me I would not count the cost.

* * *

Sunday, August 3, 1919

Yesterday afternoon as I was sitting on the porch and studying some Midrash I was interrupted by a visit from Reuben Brainin, Abe Goldberg and a young man by the name of Shenevsky (?). They came to inform me that I was expected to address a meeting that was to take place last night at the Atlantic Hotel in Belmar on behalf of the Histadruth Ivrit. My relations to the Histadruth are of recent origin. I had heard of that organization for a long time, but I was unfamiliar with its workers and purpose. About a year ago I heard that they were contemplating the organization of a training school for teachers. Their objection to the Teachers Institute which I am conducting was that we paid little attention to Hebrew, and that being financed by Schiff, it was bound to be anti-nationalist. The fact that everyone on the staff was identified

with the Zionist movement, and that most of them were well known Hebraists did not swerve the Histadruth from its purpose. They never took the trouble to inform themselves about the curriculum and spirit of the Institute. They were satisfied to take things for granted, so anxious were they to proceed with their plans for a training school. From what I have since learned about the organization, I can see why nothing has come of their undertaking. They are teachers and journalists who have not the least conception of practical matters, ~~Gefühl-Menschen~~ without an ounce of executive ability. Brainin who is now the chairman of the organization is a well known Hebrew writer, ^{he} ~~who~~ has seen and suffered much in the old as well as ⁱⁿ the new world. He has a very vague idea of life and conditions here. Having never struck root anywhere he is one of the typical Luft-Menschen who have no power to carry out any of their extravagant dreams. Abe Goldberg, a journalist in Hebrew and Yiddish seems to be somewhat more practical. But I have a feeling that a journalist is a kind of lesser Satan, inasmuch as he has to exploit human weaknesses in order to have material for copy. About seven weeks ago both of these men came to see me in New York that I should get them at least \$500 towards the amount that the organization needs to tide it over the summer months, now that it had severed connection with the Zionist organization from which it had received for a year quite a large subsidy. Being a very poor money getter myself I have asked Solomon Lampert one of the members at the Center to help me collect that amount.

In the meantime they are making appeals in several of the summer resorts. They arranged for a meeting last night at Belmar, and one for this evening at Long Branch. But with their usual knack for mismanagement, they failed to inform me. I did not mind their oversight and complied with their request to make the appeal at the Belmar meeting. When I came there last night, however, I found that the meeting had been called off because of the lateness of the hour at which the Sabbath is over nowadays.

on flyleaf

"Formerly only famous men wrote their reminiscences; today every one who intends to become famous writes his memoirs." - Aurenheimer.

I do not see that there is anything wrong in intending to become famous. It is better to try and ~~find~~ fail than not to try at all. The world is all the richer for the many who intended to become famous and did not succeed, much richer, no doubt, than if they had not made ~~the~~ attempt. Only carping individuals like the author of the above statement begrudge^g even the joy of an illusory prospect of fame.

Besides, may there not be other reasons for keeping diaries in addition to striving for fame? Some people like to converse about their experiences, others like to write them out. And everyone likes to go back to his own past and recall the things he has lived through. Keeping a diary affords enjoyment in one's later years.

November 17, 1922

I have just read the above Friday night November 22, 1968 and find it to be true.

Monday, December 8, 1919

During the last few months I have had my spiritual ups and downs as usual. For a time it seemed as though my dream of seeing the Teachers Institute housed in a building of its own would be realized. The Bullova sisters seemed to display an interest in the Teachers Institute, and after a few interviews they gave me the impression that they were going to donate \$150,000 for a building for the Institute. That money had been left to them by their deceased brother Ferdinand. Originally I heard about them in ^{connection} ~~connection~~ with the Central Jewish Institute. Sometime during the last summer Benderly happened to mention to me that he had an appointment with J.H. Rubin to talk over with him and his fellow directors of the CJI the plan of establishing a similar institution in the Bronx with the money that the Bullovas were prepared to donate for that purpose. When I heard this from Benderly I told him that he ought rather get that money for the Teachers Institute which was badly in need of a building. He agreed with me and promised to use his influence with the Bullovas and the directors of the CJI in behalf of the Teachers Institute. There followed then a number of conferences among the various parties concerned. I arranged for a meeting between Dr. Adler, myself and the Bullovas. Benderly who is bitterly opposed to Adler tried to manipulate the matters so that the Bullovas would not think of handing the money over to the Seminary authorities. During all these conferences I was given to understand that they expected to go abroad in the early part of November, and that they ~~xxx~~ were, therefore, anxious to make final arrangements before that time. Suddenly the excitement came to an end. It is more than two months since I have not heard a word from them either directly or indirectly.

From the few times that I met the Bullovas I gathered a number of interesting facts about Jewish life. They are affiliated with the Congregation which has its temple on Lexington Avenue and

55th Street. Dr. Krass is the rabbi there. Though they have been brought up in a strictly Reform environment they seem to have become intensely Jewish. One of them is a practicing lawyer. She had been associated in the legal profession with her deceased brother Ferdinand. The other is a teacher of elocution in Hunter College. The third one stays at home. They are quite elderly maids. These facts about them lead me to conclude that their Jewishness is of a morbid type, due, perhaps, to the strange manner in which their brothers died in the prime of life. To see the three of them dressed in black line into any place gives one the shivers. Perhaps in time they will make good the hopes they raised in me concerning the Teachers Institute. In the meantime I am suffering the pangs of disappointment.

* * * *

I had occasion recently to learn the moral caliber of the CJI directorate. Schoolman who is the executive director of that institution and who has been doing very good work there, has organized a public forum to which he invites various speakers to discuss topics of the day. Among the speakers he planned to invite was to be Plumb, the author of the Plumb Plan which has been accepted by the Railroad Brotherhoods. One of the directors of the CJI objected to having Plumb speak at the CJI on the ground that the plan was confiscatory and smacked of Bolshevism. L. Marshall was consulted, and he also disapproved of inviting Plumb to speak. Schoolman, however, refused to retract the invitation. This gave rise to quite a tussle. Finally Benderly and I were drawn into the controversy. Benderly was ready to urge Schoolman to back down. I took an opposite stand, and went so far as to air the trouble in the course of my sermon on Saturday, November 8. What especially peeved me about the attitude of the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ actionaries on that Board was the fact that they represented the Jewish cause as sure to suffer harm if a man like Plumb

would be allowed to speak at the CJI. Unterberg rather naively let the cat out of the bag when he claimed that the merchant class would refuse to give their support to the CJI if they heard that Plumb was invited to speak there.

* * * * *

The work at the Center is proceeding as well as one might expect. The rest of the building is going up and will probably be ready for use sometime in March or April. Then it will be possible to say whether the effort and money expended upon it have been worth while. So far it is little more than a synagogue with some accessories. I fear very much, however, that I shall find little cause for ~~the~~ satisfaction in the fact that I have affiliated myself with a group of people in whom there is very little promise of developing any kind of spiritual power. They have money and that money makes it impossible for them to care for other things in life besides their immediate and personal welfare. They wear their religion very lightly. It is with them one of the many cheap luxuries that constitute the evidences of wealth. When they voted me on Monday, September 29, 1919 an annual salary of \$10,000 I would not think of accepting it. I would have to change my mode of living so that it would be impossible for me to retain my independence which is the only asset that I at present enjoy.

A curious incident occurred in the Center which illustrates the mental attitude of some of its leading members. A committee was formed to ask each one of the present members to contribute toward the \$100,000 for the purpose of paying off notes that had to be secured to enable the organization to put up the rest of the building. One of these meetings took place a Saturday afternoon. To it there were invited a few men who never come to the Saturday morning service because they work in their offices. The committee was, therefore,

fully aware that in asking these men to appear at the
calling them away from their business places. Hence it
grace that J.H.Cohen said to Spielberg as the latter
hand a thousand-dollar bill to the committee, "We don't
money on the Sabbath. I hope the time will come when
dare to handle money publicly in the center on a Sabbath
was not only indicative of the ostrich policy so charac-
some of our leading Jews, but was entirely tactless.
to a man (Harold Spielberg) who was just beginning to
Jewish life. If one may ascribe his estrangement from
anything in particular, it was just such attitude of
inconsistency that he had beheld in Jewish officialdom.
Mr. Spielberg received another rebuff from the people.
He finally made up his mind to resign. I approved of
because I knew that he and his family would be driven
from Judaism if they were to maintain their affiliation
people of the Center than they are at present. At least
surely have been the effect that the smug, self-compla-
cent attitude of the majority of the members would
if I had not been in the ministry. As it is, I am
fighting off the depressing effect which my work in-
duces on me.

* * * *

Last week I experienced a worse onset of
have had for a long time. This time it was again
As a result of ^{William} Fischman's interest in the Teachers
probably also as a result of his intrinsic interest
tion, he undertook together with Asinof and Fischman
membership campaign for the Seminary and Institute
a number of his acquaintances they put him off with

fully aware that in asking these men to appear at the Center they were calling them away from their business places. Hence it was with ill grace that J.H.Cohen said to Spielberg as the latter was about to hand a thousand dollar bill to the committee, "We don't take any money on the Sabbath. I hope the time will come when no member will dare to handle money publicly in the center on a Sabbath." This remark was not only indicative of the ostrich policy so characteristic of some of our leading Jews, but was entirely tactless. It was addressed to a man (Harold Spielberg) who was just beginning to be won back to Jewish life. If one may ascribe his estrangement from Judaism to anything in particular, it was just such attitude of hypocrisy and inconsistency that he had beheld in Jewish officialdom. Later on Mr. Spielberg received another rebuff from the people at the Center. He finally made up his mind to resign. I approved of his doing so because I knew that he and his family would be driven further away from Judaism if they were to maintain their affiliation with the people of the Center than they are at present. At least that would surely have been the effect that the smug, self-complacent materialistic attitude of the majority of the members would have had upon me, if I had not been in the ministry. As it is, I am forever engaged in fighting off the depressing effect which my work in the Center produces on me.

* * * *

Last week I experienced a worse onset of the "blues" than I have had for a long time. This time it was again due to J.H.Cohen. As a result of ^{Wilson}Fischman's interest in the Teachers Institute and probably also as a result of his intrinsic interest in Jewish education, he undertook together with Asinof and Fischman to work for the membership campaign for the Seminary and Institute. As he approached a number of his acquaintances they put him off with the excuse that

the Seminary was not orthodox, and, therefore, not entitled to their support. He received such a reply from Marion Travis, one of the family that is backing the Yeshib^Vath R. Isaac Elhanan which is getting to be a formidable rival of the Seminary. Cohen asked me last Monday whether there was any ground for such objection to the Seminary. I was extremely exasperated at his questioning me on this subject, especially as I had done my utmost to make him acquainted with my views which he knew to be unorthodox. Again I realized the hopelessness of my situation. After all the work I put into the Center I hoped at least to get a following of some kind there; but as long^{as} Cohen is opposed to what I stand for in Judaism there is no prospect of my getting such a following. They all look up to him with a veneration that entirely neutralizes my efforts to get them to think as moderns on social and religious questions. In addition to his being a fanatic in the matter of Jewish practice, though not in that of Jewish belief, he is a dangerous reactionary on social and economic issues. He strongly resented for instance the fact that the Civics Committee of the Center had invited John Spargo to deliver a lecture at one of the Wednesday night meetings.

As on a similar occasion previously I turned to my brothers-in-law for counsel and assistance to deliver me from my spiritual prison. After talking the matter over with them, Ed made the proposition that I should become interested in one of his mills which^{he} was about to establish in Long Branch. After spending about a year in learning the manufacture of silk I might be able to take charge of a silk mill. Personally I would have been too glad to avail myself of the opportunity to learn a useful trade and make my way in the world as a worker instead of as a talker. But my folks cannot comprehend my struggle and my aims. All that they see in such a change on my part is an escape from the limelight into obscurity. They cannot

bear the thought of my apparently throwing overboard all that I have acquired in the twenty-five years of my intellectual labors. I certainly cannot expect them to understand that if I were given the opportunity to live my own life I would be prepared to bring to the world the message of a religion less artificial and more normal than the one I am making a "forlorn hope" effort to maintain and develop in this country. With aims so vague and remote I cannot expect my own wife to sympathize, and certainly not my mother whose religiosity is of that unethical and hysterically fanatical type which can see nothing but sheer madness and folly in my struggle for the light and the truth. I am unfortunately too weak to fight single handed. As Heine said "I am not made of the stuff that martyrs are made of." I suppose I shall go on squirming and writing in spiritual agony for the rest of my days.

✓ Sunday, December 21, 1919

The following is transcribed from another notebook.

(Sunday, July 20, 1919) Last Thursday Rabbi Krueger, a graduate of the Seminary of the class of 1918 came to see me. He is at present a rabbi at Norfolk, Va. The following are some of the facts which I gathered from my conversation with him.

1. There is a great real estate boom going on at Norfolk as a result of which many Jews there are growing immensely wealthy.
2. The congregation to which many of these Jews belong intend to build a new synagogue. The rabbi described them as an "Americanized Congregation." If the man I met later is typical of that congregation, "Americanized" means the ability to speak a new kind of English jargon.
3. Though Judaism plays but a small part in their lives they are opposed to having any changes in the ritual.
4. The ritual committee consists of the following: the rabbi, an old civil war veteran and a recent immigrant who at one

time saw the inside of a Talmudic treatise. The congregation relies upon the veteran and the immigrant to act as a check upon the rabbi in case he makes any departure from traditional custom. The civil war veteran, who is a German Jew, is one of the founders of the congregation which is about thirty odd years old. In all the years that he has been at Norfolk he has kept his place of business closed on Sabbaths and holidays. He is of the kind of men who have their prayer books and "machzorim" marked up with marginal notes stating the exact time at which each part of the service is to begin and conclude. Nothing can make such men depart from the fixed routine of what they conceive to be religion.

5. The rabbi is unhappy over the fact that he has no authority to lean on for the changes that he wants to introduce. ~~xxxx~~ He will in time probably join the Conference of American Rabbis.

6. In his serious moments he is also unhappy over the fact that he is not an efficient cause insofar as he fails to exert any actual influence over the lives of people. His people look upon him, he said, as a man whom they engaged to discharge their religious duties for them and do for them all the religious thinking that there is room for in their lives.

7. Otherwise, he said, he has every reason in the world to be contented. The congregation presented him with an automobile which it costs him about \$500 a year to maintain. His salary amounts to \$2500. Now and then his members invite him to go out fishing to some nearby island. They regard him as one of them. He drinks and plays poker with them and they have a good time together.

8. There are practically no Hebrew books in the entire city.

9. Although the rabbi lives at some distance from the synagogue, he walks to the synagogue on Sabbaths. On a rainy day, however,

he uses his automobile to show them, as he explained, that there is nothing wrong in riding on the Sabbath. He went on to say that if he refrains from using his car on the Sabbath, it is because his people wouldn't mind if he did ride.

(I believe that the above suggests a fairly good picture of the disintegration of Judaism in the smaller Jewish communities of this country.)

* * * *

Yesterday the sermon at the Long Branch synagogue was delivered by ^{Louis} L. Finkelstein, one of the graduates of this year from the Seminary. His sermon suggested to me the following.

It is not advisable to devote the whole of a sermon to present day problems. Unless the sermon contains a considerable amount of interpretation of biblical or rabbinic texts it gives the impression of being merely newspaper talk. Interpretation of the past is as essential as application.

A young man, especially one who is just entering upon his work should not discard altogether the conventional methods in his preaching.

A story of suffering always appeals no matter by whom it is told. His little story about the newspaper boy whom he and a friend of his found at 42 Street and 4th Avenue, parched with thirst had a good effect on his audience which on the whole was unsympathetic to the main content of his sermon.

People nowadays are extremely nervous when anyone makes mention of radicalism or Bolshevism. Garfunkel who is the president of the congregation and who had invited Finkelstein to speak, said he felt as Balak did about Balaam when Finkelstein spoke about Bolshevism.

What offended the audience most was the fact that they discerned in the preacher a taint of radicalism on economic problems.

The students of the Seminary will have to be warned not to blurt out things rudely and rashly.

In the conversation which I had with Garfunkel and I. Cohen this morning the following facts were brought out:

Engelman (an insurance agent who exploits relief work and the Orthodox Union), Fischel and Kamaiky have been the cause of large sums being lost to relief work. Each one is primarily interested in public work as a means to self-aggrandisement.

The Institutional synagogue which is conducted by Herbert Goldstein resorts to all sorts of methods to collect funds for the renovation of the buildings which it has acquired. It makes ~~inglorious~~ [?]ions on trains and subway stations in imitation of the Salvation Army and the Red Cross. The Institutional Synagogue being a local institution and intended for Jews only should not have engaged in that kind of "schnorrings." One could hear a gentile exclaim now and then "What more do the damned Jews want?"

The Hungarian Congregation Oheb Zedek of 116 Street appointed a committee to revise its by laws and constitution. When the committee brought in the recommendation that the word Hungarian be struck out there was almost a riot.

Drachman who is their English speaking rabbi gets a salary of about \$600 a year. Originally they paid him \$1200 which they reduced after he had been with them for five years. Garfunkel strongly advised him against submitting to such humiliation, but he paid no attention to Garfunkel's advice.

Recently a collection of \$10,000 was started in the congregation as a purse to be awarded their senior rabbi, Dr. Philip Klein, who has been their rabbi for the last twenty-five years. Drachman sent some of his emissaries to induce the congregation to give him \$1000 out of that amount.

Lest it appear that Drachman lacks self-respect I want to add right here that it seems to me that he is something of a moron.

(Monday, July 21, 1919)

In the course of a snatchy conversation with Rabbi Louis Epstein of Roxbury, Mass. while the Torah was being read last Sabbath in the Long Branch Synagogue I gathered that

R. Epstein is one of those rabbis who believe that the less people understand ^{say in their} of what they pray ^{ers} the more devotional they are likely to be, and that Higher Criticism is as relevant to Judaism as ~~philology~~ philology. The conclusions of Higher Criticism, he said, do not in the least affect his attitude toward the problem of Judaism.

(Tuesday, August 5, 1919)

Rabbi ^{Solomon} Goldman formerly of Brooklyn and now of Cleveland told me that he happened to come together one day in the same synagogue with a certain Rabbi Bérak who is a product of the Yeshiva. On leaving the synagogue ^{Solomon} Goldman got into a conversation with one of the older men of that congregation. When they got to talking about rabbis the old man said "To me neither you nor Burak is a rabbi. You have no beard. His is trimmed. One who is to be my rabbi must have a longer beard than mine."

(Friday, August 8, 1919)

The Committee for the Building Fund Campaign of the Federated Jewish Institutions sent out ~~various~~ ^{of appeal} circular letters. Failing of effect, they resorted to Schiff's name as an incentive for people to contribute. Attention was called to the fact that Mr. Schiff would be informed as to who contributed and who failed to contribute.

[On the other hand last Thursday (Dec. 18/19) only about twenty out of the one hundred who had been invited to Schiff's home to take steps to launch the campaign for the Seminary showed up.]

(Tuesday, August 19, 1919)

Garfunkel told me last ~~Sunday~~ Saturday that the people here in Long Branch were averse to the idea of building a center despite my advocacy of it in my sermon on *8:10/15 Sabbath*. They claimed that as a rule they stayed no more than two months in Long Branch and therefore did not think it worth while to engage in any undertaking involving additional synagogue expenditures. They want *500*. Such was their attitude almost immediately after I preached to them the idea of *per* which I interpreted as signifying that no individual or people should ever consider itself as having "arrived."

* * * *

There are still some middle class Jews who are anxious to have their children remain Jews. The case of Solomon Lamport is rare, yet as long as there are people of that type among us Judaism is bound to put up a struggle. His father was a rabbi in one of the small towns of the Pale of Settlement. He himself had the usual Yeshiva training, is strictly observant of Jewish customs, ^{and} but withal has a sense of proportion in matters Jewish. He is fanatically devoted to the cultivation of the Hebrew language and gives liberally towards the cause of Hebrew culture in this country. He seems to be rather more fairminded than men of his type usually are. I noticed in him a certain power of self-detachment that enables him to realize that he enjoys his comparative affluence not through ^{merit} ~~merit~~ nor by divine right. He noticed, for example, that the baker who brought him the bread at five o'clock in the morning took along his little boy of ten who helps in making the deliveries. He also noticed that the man who owns a candy store nearby sent his little boy to distribute the newspapers early in the morning. "And my Monte," added Lamport, "regards it as his inalienable right to have all the luxuries his heart desires."

This boy of his is to Lamport a source of perennial ^{wrong} wrong. He

is concerned not so much about his knowledge of Hebrew as about his general culture and moral character. He feels that he is losing hold on the boy. In seeking to retain his hold he has to contend with difficult odds both in his own home and outside. His wife, he said, encourages Monte in his rebelliousness against the attempt to get him to study. From what I know of her she is a typical product of the old time Jewish attitude toward woman. Lamport's friends say to him "What do you want of your boy? He is not a poor man's son. You act tyrannically in demanding of him that he study Hebrew."

It came rather as a surprise to me to learn how enlightened Lamport was in his method of trying to make a Jew out of his son. He resorts to various devices to make the ceremonies appear as little burdensome as possible. He tells Monte e.g. that when he puts on the tephillin in the morning he need not recite every day the same prayers but may read one or two chapters from the Bible in addition to the "shma." When he asks Monte to come to the synagogue on the Sabbath it is not for the purpose of reading the prayers but, as he expressed it, to have him hear the reading of the Torah, and be among Jews in a Jewish capacity at least once a week.

* * * *

I learned a good deal about the Federation from Benderly in my talk with him yesterday. He remarked that at present their main object was to collect enough money to carry on the work of the affiliated institutions. Typical of the frame of mind of the directors of the Federation was the suggestion that only amounts from \$500 and upwards should be accepted as annual membership dues. Soliciting and collecting smaller amounts does not pay. From the point of view of the hard headed business man Plaut may be right. But if the spiritual phase to the work of supporting these institutions were taken into consideration the object of the directors would be to interest

as many Jews as possible irrespective of the amounts they contributed.

Already signs of deterioration are beginning to be visible. The initial zeal which was displayed when the Federation was organized is beginning to die down. The task of having to meet an ever growing deficit is getting to be less interesting every year. Neither is there in the work that personal interest which actuated these directors when their chief concern was to take care of the respective ~~new~~ institutions which they had organized. Little is left of the glamor which the fact of dining with Schiff and Warburg at first possessed. Then again it must be borne in mind that all these men had been graduated, so to speak, from various institutions where they served their apprenticeship as communal workers. Who will replace them when they are gone? Who will care to become a cog in a big machine just for the purpose of grinding out a certain amount of money every year for work that sooner or later will for the most part be taken over by the state.

(Wednesday, August 20, 1919) (Transcribed May 11, 1920)

Isaac Cohen came to me yesterday with a peculiar Sh'eloh. Cantor Rosenblatt sang at the Casino at Deal Beach last Saturday night (Aug. 10) to a large audience. I understand that his singing was received with great applause. Toward the end of the concert the manager announced that as it is customary to have the artists who perform Saturday nights assist in the services Sunday morning, he had asked Rosenblatt to sing from the oratorio Elijah at the services the next day, and that Rosenblatt accepted the invitation. This announcement was applauded to the echo by the gathering two thirds of which were Christians. Deal Beach is known as a Methodist center, and the Casino is where the Methodists hold Sunday services.

When Garfunkel heard about this incident he at once telephoned to Rosenblatt to back out from his promise. Rosenblatt gave indisposition as his excuse to the Casino manager. What Cohen wanted to know was whether Rosenblatt should sing on some subsequent Sunday in order

not to give the Goyim an impression that a Jewish cantor can not be taken at his word, or whether Rosenblatt should under no circumstances take part in a Christian service. My reply to Cohen was that Rosenblatt had no right to participate in a service the main purpose of which was the glorification of Jesus.

* * *

Sol Lamport told me that Friedland's Hebrew National School was being hampered in his work by a group of people on the East Side who were among the organizers of the school but who practically abandoned it when it was short of funds. But since the Federation of Charities has been subsidizing the school these people have come back and are interfering with the management of the school as hitherto conducted. That being the case Friedland is thinking very seriously of severing his connection with the school to which he has given ten years of his thought and devotion. ^{Lamport} He called upon me today and asked whether I could give him a position at the Institute.

Monday, September 1, 1919

I was at Woonsocket, R. I. yesterday to participate in the installation exercises of my brother-in-law, Dr. ^{Phineas} Israeli. The Jewish community in that town numbers about seven to eight hundred souls. Despite the comparatively small number of the population they are quite active in all Jewish affairs, and have practically only one congregation which promises to become an important factor in the lives of the people there. All this is due to the presence of an energetic and good-hearted young man of about thirty odd years. If every community could boast of a man like Arthur Darman Judaism would be assured of its continuance in this country.

Thursday, September 18, 1919

On September 5 (Friday) I met on the train going from Long Branch to New York a former classmate of mine, Henry Moskowitz who for a time headed the Ethical Culture branch on the East Side.

Knowing that he had severed his connection with the movement I took advantage of this opportunity to ~~learn~~ learn from him the reason for his giving up his work as an Ethical Culturist. He frankly admitted that Ethical Culture had ceased to satisfy him spiritually because it dwelt primarily upon the abstract concept of duty without being able to contribute any definite content to that concept. When I asked him why he had also given up politics in which he was interested after he had given up his connection with the E.C. movement, he answered that to succeed in politics without betraying one's ideals one has to have independent means.

* * *

On Tuesday, Sept. 2 I saw the Bullova sisters for the third time in the course of my negotiations with them for the purpose of interesting them in the Teachers Institute and getting them to contribute towards the erection of a building a sum of money which one of their deceased brothers had left to them. I had Dr. Adler along with me because I wanted him to get them to commit themselves. He, however, had a plan of his own which only helped to mix matters up. He suggested they contribute their gift in the form of an endowment fund the interest of which should go toward the maintenance of the Institute. He apparently was instructed by Schiff and Marshall to make that suggestion in order that they might be relieved of the need of having to replenish the treasury of the Institute. The Bullovas would not hear of Adler's plan. Neither did he appear to make a very good impression upon them. What especially caused him to lose out with them was the remark he made to the effect that he regretted ever having devoted himself exclusively to Jewish work. He claimed that his prestige with the Jewish community suffered the moment he gave up his work at the Smithsonian. What prompted him to make this remark was the hope expressed by Miss Emily that she would be able to give up her law practice and devote herself exclusively to the furtherance of Judaism.

(Transcribed Wednesday, May 12, 1920)

Last night (Wed. Sept. 17) for the first time in my life I met a man who not only believes that the Jews should send out missionaries to preach Judaism, but who himself is acting in such a capacity. He is Jacques Faitlovitch, the man who has devoted himself to the task of reclaiming the Falashas to Judaism. I have no idea what the Falasha^{look}/~~xxx~~ like but if it were left to my imagination to depict one I would say that they resembled Faitlovitch. Whether he developed his appearance from working among the Falahsas, or began to work among them because his appearance unfitted him for aught else, is more than I know.

I asked Faitlovitch in the course of the conversation to tell me what message he thought Judaism had to give to the world. His reply was "The unity of mankind under the *אברהם אבינו*. Upon questioning him further as to the meaning of Torah, he said that Torah represented the eternal principle of life revealed by God to man. I wanted to pin him down to some proposition that might be intelligible to the average man. I had to draw him out on the question as to the historicity of the revelation recorded in the Torah. He admitted that he took the story of revelation in an allegorical sense, and that he made broad use of the principle *אברהם אבינו*. He insisted, however, that the entire people did experience some kind of revelation, whatever be the sense in which many think divine revelation possible. To him this fact together with that of the spiritual continuity of the Jewish people constituted the earmarks of Judaism.

I said to him "How about the Chinese?" He replied that the spiritual continuity of the Chinese cannot be compared with that of the Jewish people. Incidentally, he told me that he had recently studied the Chinese language and literature with a view ultimately of making prop^aganda for Judaism among the Chinese. The Chinese

peoples he said had gone through different stages that were so much at variance with one another that they could not be considered as having gone through a continuous development. Idolatry, Taoism, Confucianism have nothing in common with one another. There can therefore be no spiritual identity or sense of continuity in races that have gone through these religions.

His method of approach to problems of religion was criticized by me as being unpedagogic at the present time when people have little patience with the old theological terminology. I urged strongly upon him that he learn to translate his religious emotions into terms of human nature and of the average man's experience.

Friday, September 19, 1919

Last night (Thursday, September 18/19) the tenth formal opening of the classes of the Institute took place. The best so far.

* * *

I have discovered the secret of spiritual success as I came across the following in one of Lincoln's addresses: "If you would win a man to your cause first convince him that you are his sincere friend."

Sunday, September 21, 1919

J. A. Blumberg came to see me today. He is eighty-five and apparently on his last legs, though he will probably live a good long while yet. He came to see me about a matter of trusteeship. He told me that he appointed me as successor to him in the execution of a will made out by a man out West to whom he had been of assistance years ago. I enjoyed listening to the story of his experiences in Texas where he owns a good many acres of land. Among the interesting things he told me were the following: 1) His clerk once said to him: You can hire a Mexican to kill anybody you want for forty cents on the installment plan. 2) The Aztecs used to be a very honest folk until they came

into contact with our civilization. In this respect they were like the Esquimaux who were known never to touch any of the provisions left by the explorers. All that is changed now.

* * *

Wednesday, September 24, 1919

Last Monday I met J. H. Cohen at the Center. He had just returned from the White Mountains apparently improved. Someone who had met him a little while before said to him, "Why do you work so hard? You ought to go somewhere for a rest. You need it badly."

On Sunday I went with Sol Lamport to look at books in the possession of a Rabbi Bressler from Brooklyn which were for sale. When we were through Rabbi Bressler accompanied us in the automobile on his way to the Bronx where a congregation was waiting to hear his "Derashah." A white handkerchief did service for a collar. He was interested in comfort more than in beauty, he said. Besides there was his black beard to cover up the impropriety in dress.

I was asked to officiate at the funeral of a young woman by the name of Mrs. Sam Krohnberg, the wife of one of our Center members. Knowing how little interest the Krohnberg family took in the Center I was naturally inclined to be prejudiced against the woman and I considered it an ordeal to have to speak at her funeral. ~~But~~ But when I visited the home the night before the funeral and learned something about her life I realized that I was wrong in classing her unqualifiedly with the pleasure loving wives of our Jewish nouveaux riches. I learned, for example, that she was the one who started her husband on his successful business career and that in doing that she had toiled hard under conditions of great poverty. Another fact to her credit was that she looked after her parents with a great deal of

solicitude going to the extent of making them the beneficiaries of a \$25000 life insurance policy. I hope that this will teach me to learn more about people rather than to pass judgment on them.

As I was standing in the street waiting for the hearse to pass, Philip Weinstein came up to me and engaged me in conversation.

"We move in, we move about, we move out" I quoted, referring to man's life on earth. "But why is it," I added, "that we only stop to think of this when we are at funerals?"

"If you mean me, you are mistaken," he replied.

"But isn't this true of most people?" I asked.

"Ninety-nine of a hundred. But I belong to the one per cent. If I were to die tomorrow I should feel satisfied that I have done my share in the world," he said.

He then went on to recount some of his philanthropies. He told me of his lending \$30000 to a man from whom he does not expect to get back the money. Yet if he had refused the loan, the man would surely have committed suicide. He then mentioned his contribution to the Daughters of Jacob Home. The next large sum he spent was \$19000 for seats in the Center. I explained to him that he deserved no ^{prize} for what he gave to the Center, since it was like spending on his own home. He parried my objection by claiming that \$19000 would have been ample for his share. The only reason for his giving more was, as he put it, that he wanted to do as well ^{as} ~~in~~ the next one, and was not going to allow himself to be outdone by anybody.

I then took another tack.

"I do not refer to charity. Aren't you anxious to do more than what you are doing now, let us say, in the way of industrial adjustment?"

He did not give me an opportunity to get the better of him.

"Our people are treated better than in any other factory. We never give them reason to strike. We give them all that they ask for."

I was non-plussed. Here was a self-satisfied individual to whom I was totally unable to communicate any of the Welt-Schmerz Problem. What was I to do? Is the man really satisfied with himself or is he only putting on airs? He has no children and is a man of about fifty. Does not this fact make him feel sad sometimes?

Monday, October 27, 1919

Harold Berman, a former student of the Seminary and at present a free lancer, dabbling in business, public activity and private teaching, is a frequenter in the homes of some of the worst Center specimens. He told me two interesting incidents:

Moskovitz - mountainously fat and inordinately vulgar, a lover of poker and hazaruth - has a little boy who was taught by Berman to recite the Kiddush every Friday night. The boy refused to make Kiddush because the father not only paid no attention but would start eating before the boy had a chance to get through.

Louis Krohnberg at one time had Berman give him lessons in Hebrew. Krohnberg's wife strongly objected against her husband studying Hebrew. Berman was thereupon asked by Krohnberg to come to his shop. For a year and a half Krohnberg tried hard to learn but did not succeed and had to give up.

(This completes the part transcribed)

(I wonder whether this is the man who is now (May 12, 1920) under an indictment for gambling and swindling away \$250,000 from his confreres.)

July 27, 1920

In order that I might not be tempted to put off any longer the resumption of these notes I shall hurry over briefly some of the incidents that have taken place since the fall of 1919.

Dec. I received a letter from Frank, superintendent of the Beth Israel Hospital asking my opinion with regard to autopsies. Being afraid to commit myself I did not reply. I discussed the question with Prof. Ginzberg but got no satisfaction.

The Bullova sisters are still keeping me on the string. Some time in December a brother of theirs showed up, wasted three precious hours of mine and carried off the Essays of Ahad Ha'Am. After Pesah the 'graces' themselves, who had in the meantime returned from Europe whither they had gone to establish some charity fund, interviewed me again on the subject of the Teachers Institute, this time probing somewhat my convictions on religious matters. They informed me that H.P. Mendes had told them that I was more radical than the Reformers, and was not to be trusted. I don't blame the poor man for saying what he did about me after I refused to discuss with him by mail the question whether I believed in revelation that he put to me point blank in a letter. Of course this was only an evasion. But who could discuss such a subject with a simpleton like H.P.M.? So far I have not heard a word from the Bullovas.

I am still affiliated with the Center, that is, I am still their Rabbi. The preaching which I kept up regularly was good. Now and then I would touch upon the economic problem especially around Pesah time. Every time I did so I rubbed the fur the wrong way.

The building has been completed. The real test of the institution will be next year when the actual program of the Center idea will be put into effect. I am fortunate in having a good

July 27, 1920

In order that I might not be tempted to put off any longer the resumption of these notes I shall hurry over briefly some of the incidents that have taken place since the fall of 1919.

Dec. I received a letter from Frank, superintendent of the Beth Israel Hospital asking my opinion with regard to autopsies. Being afraid to commit myself I did not reply. I discussed the question with Prof. Ginzberg but got no satisfaction.

The Bullova sisters are still keeping me on the string. Some time in December a brother of theirs showed up, wasted three precious hours of mine and carried off the Essays of Ahad Ha'Am. After Pesah the 'graces' themselves, who had in the meantime returned from Europe whither they had gone to establish some charity fund, interviewed me again on the subject of the Teachers Institute, this time probing somewhat my convictions on religious matters. They informed me that H.P. Mendes had told them that I was more radical than the Reformers, and was not to be trusted. I don't blame the poor man for saying what he did about me after I refused to discuss with him by mail the question whether I believed in revelation that he put to me point blank in a letter. Of course this was only an evasion. But who could discuss such a subject with a simpleton like H.P.M.? So far I have not heard a word from the Bullovas.

I am still affiliated with the Center, that is, I am still their Rabbi. The preaching which I kept up regularly was good. Now and then I would touch upon the economic problem especially around Pesah time. Every time I did so I rubbed the fur the wrong way.

The building has been completed. The real test of the institution will be next year when the actual program of the Center idea will be put into effect. I am fortunate in having a good

assistant in a man of about thirty-one, Emanuel Davis. I do not know what I would have done if Miss Langer hadn't gotten married. For all we know, Judaism may be saved because Miss Langer found a husband.

There is little to boast about the Center group. So far they have given little evidence of spiritual growth. They display no interest in the various pamphlets, questionnaires, books, etc., that are sent out from the office. Last January I saw to it that each one received a copy of Goddman's History of the Jews, so that they might acquire some historical Jewish background. I can vouch that only J.H. Cohen and one other person looked into the book.

April 18 the Center people held a dinner to celebrate the finishing of the building. The annual meeting was held at the same time. The dinner was noisy and long drawn out. The desert was hardly served when the young folks, they upon whom we stake all our hopes, rose as one man and walked down stairs to dance. This was too much for me. The lack of manners, the crassness that makes it possible for a banquet in the interests of a religious cause to be unattended by a word of prayer or blessing aroused my resentment to such a degree that I too walked out. No speeches were delivered that evening. Not that anyone took it to heart.

A very interesting experience to me was the course of lectures I gave at the Zionist Headquarters of the 7th district at 132 West 72 Street Sunday evenings beginning Jan. 11. I learned a good deal. But there were only about eight or ten who attended the entire series. What they got out of it is problematic. The one to whom I owe my having undertaken to give the course despite the considerable work at the Center and the new course of lectures at the Seminary is Mrs. Lindheim. She is an extraordinary energetic worker for Zionism. She is one of the few spiritual seekers that are still to be found among

the middle class Jews. Her bringing up was under Reform auspices. Schulman confirmed her. But shortly after her confirmation she grew very restless spiritually. It is only in recent years that she seems to have found a spiritual haven in Zionism and she has thrown herself into the cause with all the zeal of a convert. Religiously she is affiliated with Wise's Free Synagogue. As a result of her contact both with Wise and myself she was anxious to bring about a 'rapprochement' between us. I went to see Wise and after a few interviews with him we seemed to feel that ultimately he might get the funds for a Rabbinical Training School of which I would be given charge. In the meantime I was to give a course on "The Social Interpretation of Religion" that was to run for an entire year. Lately, however, I wrote to him that I will not be able to give the course on account of the unforeseen duties I shall have to attend to by reason of Friedlaender's death. The actual reason for my withdrawal is the contempt in which Wise is held by all of Friedlaender's friends who hold Wise largely responsible for having prevented F. from going with the Red Cross Commission to Palestine.

Friedlaender's death which the papers reported two weeks ago last Sunday (July 11) has a very depressing effect on me as I witness the evidences of futility of so talented a life and so noteworthy a character as his was. He went through so much, he was in contact with numerous cultures and absorbed the best that was in them, cosmopolitan in his sympathies yet intensely Jewish in his strivings, a man of facile pen and silver tongue, a master of ^{wit} and repartee, and yet a failure. That he should be cut off in the prime of his life by murderers' hands in a wild forest in distant Ukraine, that his body should wallow naked in the mud of a deserted road in Wild Russia, is something that my poor brain cannot grasp. I have long

given up attempting to square life with the traditional conceptions of Providence, but such evidences of Unreason are to me staggering.

* * * *

August 5, 1920

Dr. Benderly seems to have passed through a crisis both spiritual and physical during the last year. He is by nature very reserved and never speaks about his troubles though these may be weighing down ever so heavily upon him. But from a few remarks that his wife passed while I was speaking to her by 'phone in the course of my inquiring after his health - that was last March when he was sick with ~~pneumonia~~ pneumonia - I gathered that matters had reached with him such a pass that he was ready to commit suicide. When he recovered from his illness he was a broken man, though he kept on repeating that he was himself again. Fortunately he succeeded in interesting a number of his friends in a Palestinian business scheme that necessitated his first going to Palestine and reporting on the prospects there. He left for Europe during the latter part of April.

Before his departure he was given a banquet by Unterberg to which a few of his friends were invited. A number of us delivered short addresses: Magnes, Marshall, Semel, Magnes as usual was the master spokesman. But when Benderly replied he spoke in a manner that brought tears to my eyes. It was to me a most thrilling spiritual experience to hear him say that he was grateful for all that he had gotten out of life. He spoke like a saint. That he of all men should have been able to find some sweetness in the bitter cup of life that he had been made to taste proved to me that the supremacy of spirit over matter was not altogether a phantasy. I do not remember what any one of us said. Even my own remarks I recollect but vaguely. I recall having stressed the fact that Benderly taught the Jews of America to think of Jewish education in communal instead of institutional terms.

But what he said stands out clearly in my mind. He began by saying that he disagreed with every one of the speakers who pointed out in one form or another that the Jewish community failed to appreciate what he did in the way of upbuilding Jewish education. On the contrary, he added, he could not be grateful enough to God for all the kindnesses he had been shown. He then went on to speak of the dreams of his youth when from the Lebanon heights he mused of the land beyond the Mediterranean, the land of golden opportunities for the Jewish people, opportunities not of money making but of spiritual achievement -- America. What a difference in attitude toward this country between Friedlaender and Benderly! The former always regarded this country as harboring a crude uncouth civilization, inferior to the civilizations of Europe with their ancient traditions, whereas Benderly loves the life here for the infinite opportunities, that it holds out to those who have spirit enough to turn those opportunities to good advantage.

With Benderly away, and with the resources of the Bureau of Education shrunken the prospect of Jewish education seemed anything but bright. I, therefore, encouraged Unterberg who has been the Chairman of the Board of School Aid - a body consisting of the representatives of the seven Talmud Torahs that are subventioned by the Federation of Philanthropic Societies to take steps toward organizing a separate Federation for the maintenance of the existing Jewish religious schools and establishing new schools. A Federation of that kind would have to raise at least \$1,000,000 a year. Unfortunately those who are genuinely interested in Jewish education are but a handful. There are probably no more at present than ten men in Greater New York who could be relied on to take a leading part in the organization of such a Federation. The main difficulty just

August 9, 1920

now, however, is the withdrawal from the Federation of Philanthropic Societies Warburg is strongly opposed to the organization of a separate association for the support of the religious schools. Without his consent and subsequent support the undertaking might fail. Despite that Unterberg, Semel and Fischman are going ahead with the work. They have Marshall's approval.

I returned not long ago from Tannersville where I spent the last two weeks. We could not afford to rent a cottage in Long Branch or elsewhere as we did in previous years. We had determined to stay in town; but as Max's family intended to spend their vacation away from home, Max offered us his home during the four weeks that they were to be away. I therefore spent three weeks beginning July 1 in commuting to Far Rockaway. My health being somewhat below normal, Lena insisted upon my going to the mountains.

There I had occasion to become more closely acquainted with Prof. Marx of the Seminary. I found him a congenial companion, of very mediocre attainments; if it were not for his methodical training he never would have commanded the position in Jewish scholarship that he does today. Religiously, I found him quite illiberal. I do not look forward to any assistance from him in any attempt to improve conditions in the spiritual life of our people. In fact he is likely to prove a formidable obstructionist.

More than a year has passed since the conferences that took place at the YMHA in June 1919 in answer to the call sent out by the Committee of Six. Max Margolis who had been appointed temporary chairman was overawed by Adler who had ~~heard~~ heard from Prof. Ginzberg of what took place. Ginzberg to prove his loyalty to the Seminary communicated to Adler while the latter was in Paris, that he (Ginzberg)

had prevented the holding of the meeting at the Seminary building. For this act Adler expressed his gratitude to Ginzberg. At the instigation of Rubenowitz I took the matter into my own hands and called a small conference at the Jewish Center on Tuesday, May 11. The developments since then are recorded in the minutes of that and subsequent meetings.

* * * *

Monday, April 18, 1921

(A summary of all that has transpired with me since August 9, 1920 will be written up later when I shall have more time.)

5:00 P.M. - A woman by the name of Mrs. Mary Horowitz came to see me at the suggestion of S. Diamant, the manager of the Hebrew National Orphan House about a boy of hers who is in the care of the Children's Aid Society. The boy had been misbehaved and played truant. At the age of 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ he ran away from his home, in order to get himself placed on a farm. He came after a while under the supervision of the Children's Aid Society in June 1918. After keeping him for half-a year on a nearby farm they transferred him to one over 250 miles away. When his mother, after great difficulties got access to him, she learned that he attended church regularly and was being taught to become a Christian. She has since then been making every possible effort to have the boy either come home or transferred to the care of a Jewish institution. The boy absolutely refuses to return home. She applied to the Jewish Protectory Association. They told her that she ought not to annoy the authorities of the Children's Aid Society with her insistence upon removing him from Christian influence. But she would not listen.

I asked her about her husband and children. She told me that she had five children, three boys and two girls. There was something mentally wrong with another of her boys. Her husband works as a jeweler.

Having been out on strike for about seven months and the strike having been lost through the consequent transfer of the trade, he has been obliged to find work in Buffalo, where he is at present.

* * * *

Thursday, April 21, 1921

I visited late last night the group of young men and women conducted by Rabbi Kaddushin at the Central Jewish Institute. I found about fifteen young people engaged in the discussion of ceremonies. They were as intelligent and educated a Jewish group as one can expect to meet in these parts. I came with the intention of forming them into a permanent group to pursue the study of social, economic and personal problems from the standpoint of Jewish values. But when I proposed this to them Arthur Rubin, a keen minded but disputatious chap threw cold water on the suggestion by arguing that the young people had come only out of curiosity and were not interested in establishing a permanent group. When I made it clear to them that only if they had come with the desire to express themselves Jewishly were they amenable to permanent organization, he insisted that they were nothing more than a kind of Browning club. The curious feature was that, as far as he himself was concerned, he joined this group not merely out of curiosity but to find a rationale for his desire to remain a Jew. He simply took it upon himself to describe the others as inferior to him in sincerity and interest. He succeeded however in frustrating my purpose.

Our young people from whom one might expect signs of Jewish awakening or reconstruction are disappointing. Their sense of ego does not permit them to sink their individuality in the cause of intellectual ability they might be of great service to it.

A young lady by the name of Miss Kittay, a senior at Barnard, brought up in an atmosphere of Orach Chayim type of Jewish religiosity

said that she had entered the group out of curiosity. Before she came she believed that the whole ceremonial system was a lot of hocus pocus. She now realizes that it was part of a normal evolutionary process in human development. Even now however she does not see why she should remain Jewish. I analyzed her case as follows: She was the battle ground of two conflicting tendencies: the ^{desire} ~~desire~~ to be convinced of her Jewishness, and the desire to run away as far as possible from Judaism. It was the former ^{con} ~~in~~structive tendency that really led her to come to the class, but so strong was her antipathy to things Jewish that she interpreted her coming as due to intellectual curiosity. Of course from the standpoint of psycho-analysis there were other subconscious motives of which she was probably aware only in a vague way.

Philip Weinstein came to see me this evening about performing some kind of ceremony at his silver wedding anniversary. He is a member of the Center and reputed to be very rich. I see him only on the High Holidays. He is simple and ignorant. He takes pleasure in making money, gambling, in cards and in stocks and dispensing charity. He has been quite sick the last two or three years and at one time was at death's door. When he recovered he donated \$10,000 to the Daughters' Of Jacob Home for the T'hillim said in his behalf.

When I asked him to promise me that when he came back next Fall he would attend services occasionally he said that he would try. To prove to me that he was interested in Judaism he told me of a quarrel he had had with one of the founders of the synagogue at Miami for making no provision for the religious training of the children.

I had really intended to be out of town on May 8 so as not to have to attend the celebration of his silver wedding. But now that he came to see me, I do not see ~~when~~ how I could refuse his invita-

tion. That would create ill-feeling against the Center whose interests I must guard so long as I am connected with it.

Since January 1920 I have been in the habit of working out my sermons together with Dr. L. Finkelstein of the Bronx Synagogue. He is a scholarly young man, of fine character, but does not take his rabbinic calling with sufficient earnestness. He has absorbed a good deal of the scholarly virus of cynicism from the Seminary atmosphere. I have a hard time getting him to realize that a preacher who fails to think out his ideas clearly and genuinely comes under the category of *אדם שאין לו דעה* and is to be condemned ^{far} ~~less~~ more than a carpenter or plumber who skimps his job. I can't get him to realize that without being able to think in terms of present day psychology and philosophy one must fall back upon the ~~hackneyed~~ ^{analyzed} abstract slogans of religion that have brought religion into disrepute. Yet I hope that in time he will be won for the cause of intellectual and spiritual honesty.

Is it not sad to find that our best men are devoid of ^{the} ~~its~~ very sense for intellectual honesty?

He is only a young man of twenty-five. Already his life is not his own. If he had had his way, he told me the other day, he would have taken up law instead of the ministry. It was the pressure of home environment that forced him into the rabbinate. And with this state of mind a man is supposed to guide advise and inspire Jewish life! His case is by no means exceptional. In fact, it is altogether typical of the effect of the abnormal existence that we Jews lead in Galuth where our spiritual interests have nothing to do with our practical affairs.

Friday, April 22, 1921

The method of issuing watered stock has been adopted in many of the appeals for charity. Mr. X is announced as donating \$1000 whereas he actually donates \$200. This is done in order to insure large contributions.

The subject of Dr. Elfenheim's sermons (of Pincus Elijah Congr.) for the first two days of Passover are as follows:

1. Einstein Theory of Relativity and its moral application to Passover.
2. The Synagogue as a Leavening Force in the life of American Israel
(capitalization or lack of it not mine)

* * * *

Monday, April 25, 1921 p. 30

Yesterday J.H. Cohen, Fischman, ^{Abraham} Rothstein and I met at Cohen's house. The little gathering took place at my instance. I wanted to get the advice of these men, especially Cohen's, with regard to the attitude of the Center toward the Weizmann controversy that is at present raging in this country. I also had in mind the organization of a kind of pastoral committee in the Center to be of assistance to members who were burdened by troubles of a business or personal character. My intention was to have the meeting take place at my house, but Cohen having had one of his asthma attacks the night before, I thought that he would not be in a condition to leave his house. I realized later that such was not the case. He had been absenting himself from the services the last few months. While illness may have had something to do with his absence, I believe that he deliberately kept away from the Center, in order to make the other trustees miss him, so that if things went wrong financially

they would naturally ascribe it all to his failure to take an active part in the running of the Center. But why shouldn't he take an active part as heretofore? Naturally, because Kaplan with his new fangled ideas about Judaism has made it impossible for Cohen to continue taking the same interest as of old. It was into this situation that he wanted to manoeuvre me, and he succeeded because I deliberately allowed myself to be manoeuvred into it.

אברהם אביהם

This came about at the conference yesterday. When I made the proposition for which I had primarily called the gathering he reacted in a cold and listless way, as though he was not interested as to what the Center did. When there was nothing more to say about either proposition, Cohen asked what became of the conference which I had arranged to hold every two weeks in accordance with the resolution of the members' meeting called by me for Feb. 9. When I replied that there was no use of holding the meeting² with him out of town or ill most of the time, he said, "Why not hold a conference right now?" I agreed to our taking up the discussion as to what my relation should be to the Center. He entered into the spirit of it as though he had been waiting long for the opportunity. In fact, I gathered from the discussion that before I came he had been trying to persuade Rothstein to raise the issue. Rothstein on the other hand made an effort to shunt off the discussion.

Cohen tried very hard to get me into a theological discussion on the question as to whether the Jews exist for the Torah or the Torah for the Jews. He claimed that only recently did he realize what I meant by saying that my conception of Judaism involved shifting the center of gravity from the Torah to the people. I did not allow myself to be drawn into an argument for which I told him frankly I did not consider him qualified.

"Why not have the matter referred to a committee of rabbis who are authorities on Jewish law?" he asked.

"There are very few rabbis to whom I would submit my case. They would have to possess a modern education and to think as moderns, in addition to being authorities on Jewish law," was my reply.

Seeing that we were getting nowhere, I asked them to suggest a way out of the impasse. Thereupon Fischman made the suggestion that inasmuch as I had once before asked for a leave of absence, I might do so again, with the understanding that it was to be for one year, and that if by the end of that time either Cohen or I changed our attitude I should resume the rabbinate. I was surprised to see Cohen accept the suggestion heartily. I certainly was not averse to it, because the truth was that I had been seriously contemplating some kind of change in my relation to the Center. Just what I was to do was not clear to me, until the conference yesterday. Everybody went away happy.

Yesterday (the second day of Pesah) I spoke on the present controversy in the Zionist ranks. I pointed out that it was the duty of every Jew to urge upon the European Zionists and American Zionists to settle their differences. Shelvin of the Jewish Morning Journal asked me after the services whether I cared to see Weizmann and place my suggestion before him. Replying that I would gladly do so, he arranged for a conference at 3:00 this afternoon.

I found Weizmann in his room at the Commodore. I told him that the only right thing for both parties to do was to submit their case before an impartial jury whose business it should be not merely to effect a compromise but to decide who is in the right and who in the wrong on the various issues raised in the controversy. He at first took exception on the ground that the main question was as to who had a right to interpret the resolution of the Zionist Congress or London Conference and a question of that kind could not be

decided by a body of disinterested laymen, because it would destroy the discipline of the organization. I answered that there was no case that could not be adjudicated. Whenever an individual or group of individuals takes issue with a government, the government does not claim that it can not enter into controversies with individuals or groups of individuals, but submits its case to a jury. He had to admit that I was right, but he said he would have to get the consent of his colleagues on the Executive committee, which means that he would have to cable to them. I doubt very much whether he would actually do what he said unless further pressure ^{were} brought to bear upon him.

In his talk with me I was confirmed in the impression I had for years that the great trouble with Jewish institutions and organizations is that they fall into the hands of half-Jews who either do not understand the psychology of the Jew, or are not in sympathy with the Jewish will to live which those institutions and organizations represent. What does ^{Louis} ~~Paris~~arsahll know about the inner life of the Jew to be at the head of an institution like the Seminary which should have been the cornerstone of a great Jewish Educational system in this country. Or what does ^{Louis} ~~Brandeis~~ know of Judaism to understand Zionism? But we are so much flattered when we see one of these half-Jews take an interest in Judaism that we at once put him at the helm and there our trouble begins.

* * * *

Wednesday, April 27, 1921

I attended yesterday a luncheon meeting for the purpose of taking steps to terminate the present deadlock in the Zionist ranks. Present was Rottenberg, Unterberg, Benderly, Semel and Fischman. My suggestion was that a group of 75 or 100 Jews constitute themselves a Commission to investigate the cause of the deadlock and to publish its findings. The Commission should appoint for this purpose an in-

vestigating committee which would invite each side of the controversy to state its case. Those present asked me to take charge of the matter. In the meantime I am waiting to hear the outcome of the offer of the Canadian Zionists to mediate.

Yesterday morning I received a letter from Finkelstein in which he stated that he did not care to continue working with me as he has been doing the last year and a half. He alleges in the letter that I had a tendency to make him "work in ways that are not natural to him." It appears that my expecting him to take up the work of the Renaissance was the cause of his writing the letter. I replied that I wanted to discuss the letter with him. He came to see me today. I proved to him that he was entirely unjustified in assuming that I wanted to do his thinking for him, or that I expected him to undertake work uncongenial to him. We parted friends and decided to work jointly on the subject dealt with in the sermon "God the Liberator."

I worked out the sermons for the 7th and 8th days of Passover together with Rabbi Mortimer Cohen of Phila. and Rose (soon to be rabbi) of Bay Ridge. I had occasion to remonstrate with Cohen for not having made progress in his Jewish studies ever since he had been graduated from the Seminary (in 1919). I urged him especially to devote at least half an hour daily to the study of Bible. Most of these people display their *ניצחון* or when they quote. Thus Cohen quoted the verse from Psalms as reading *בְּיָמֵינוּ*

* * * *

Tuesday, May 3, 1921

Yesterday I learned from Magnes that he and Marshall had met Weizmann on Friday night and spoke to him of the advisability of having a number of Baale-batim who were anxious to do their duty toward the upbuilding of Palestine learn from him and *Judge Julian* Mack the main issue of the

present controversy in the ranks of the Zionists. They would not undertake to arbitrate. Their only purpose ^{would be} ~~is~~ to obtain information. Weizmann promised to let Magnes know whether he would be willing to meet such a committee. Yesterday Magnes received a telegram from Weizmann who had left for Montreal the day before, saying that he would be ready to state his case before a group of Bagle-batim on Thursday, May 19 or Friday, May 20.

I immediately got into touch with Judge Mack and obtained his consent to come before that group together with Weizmann.

Today Schmarya Levin got in touch with me. ~~He~~ I informed him of Mack's acceptance. Levin asked that Ussichkin be also permitted to be present. I got Mack's consent to that as well. The understanding is that Mack would also bring someone with him who would be in a position to speak with authority on the Zionist work in Palestine. Mack stipulated with me that he be not forced as he had been once before to speak in German in order that Ussischkin might understand.

Drs. Weitzmann and ^{Messersohn} ~~Messersohn~~ attended services at the Center last Friday.

The Board of Trustees ^{of} ~~for~~ the Center met last night and discussed at great length whether or not to accede to my request for a leave of absence. I understand that seven out of the nine present were apposed to my taking a leave of absence for a year. J. H. Cohen ~~thought~~ fought very hard to have them grant me the leave of absence. A committee was appointed to meet me next Thursday.

* * * *

Thursday, May 5, 1921

Last night the annual meeting of the Center was supposed to take place, but there was such a violent rainstorm raging that only a small ~~group~~ number of the members came. Most of those who came did so because they expected that the question of my asking for a leave of absence would be brought up, and they were determined not to allow the trustees - i.e., J.H.Cohen - to give me a leave for a year.

When the number of those present reached about twenty~~five~~ I suggested that we postpone the meeting to some day next week, and that those present discuss informally Center matters. We went upstairs to the dining room. Fischman no sooner opened the meeting than questions began flying from different quarters as to the rumor of my asking for a year's leave of absence. Fischman and Cohen tried to avert the discussion but without avail. The air soon became supercharged with ill feeling and anger. I saw that the time had come for putting formalities aside. I got up and in a calm and collected manner set forth the issue raised by J.H. Cohen. I stated that I still believed that the question of orthodoxy was irrelevant to the larger purposes for which the Center stood, that so long as I did nothing in my own life or in the Center that could be objected to by the Orthodox wing, I should be allowed to work out those plans which I considered essential to the future of Judaism.

Despite my having spoken frankly and openly on the question at issue, Cohen for a long time refused to say anything in reply. But I and others insisted until he had to give way. What he said seemed to have made little impression. I felt constrained to reply. In the reply I brought out that the specific issue was whether the educational work in the Center should be dominated by the orthodox point of view, or the point of view upon which I had been laboring all these years. I pleaded with those present not to attempt to settle

the questions on fundamentals in the course of one or two meetings but to devote every Wednesday night of the coming year to discussing them. I doubt, however, whether very many of the congregation could be induced to take their Judaism so seriously. So long as they expect a fight they are interested, but discussion for the sake of finding out the truth they find too tame.

It was the expectation of a fight that brought S. C. Lamport to the meeting at a late hour. He was more suppressed and sedate than usual, but his championing of my work makes me feel uncomfortable, for I know very well that he has not the least interest in Judaism.

Fischman came to see me at my request this afternoon. I wanted to persuade him to retain the presidency of the Center, for his giving up the presidency at this juncture would be interpreted as a protest of the Cohen faction. It appears, however, that Cohen gained a march on me and so impregnated Fischman's mind with the idea that he has no right to preside over the Center so long as my point of view is represented in the educational work, that Fischman seems immovable. In the course of my conversation I learned that one of the pupils of Kadushin's class got into an argument with Fischman about some question involving the Mosaic authorship of the Torah and that in the course of the argument she told F. that she had been taught not to disclose to people at home the views on the Bible that she was being given in the classroom.

* * * *

Friday, May 6, 1921

A committee consisting of Rothstein, Unterberg, Judge Rosalvsky and Asinof came to see me last night. That committee was appointed by the Board of Trustees of the Center to take up with me the question of the leave of absence for a year. The

committee realized, after what had been taken place last Wednesday night, that the majority of the members were strongly opposed to the Trustees' granting me the leave of absence, now that the real reason for my asking it has become public knowledge. Instead of the Committee proposing to me a plan of action, they asked me to tell them what I thought was the best way out of the difficulty. I tried to convince them that Cohen had been pestering my life ever since we began to discuss the Center. I read to them what I had written into this record on April 15, 1916. My advice to them was that they should ignore Cohen, and promise me the cooperation which I needed to make the Center a success. I also told them that I thought ^{Fischman} ~~Schuman~~ ought to continue as president for another year at least. I cannot say that I got them to see my way, for when they left they still held to the purpose of continuing their parleys with Cohen. I know that unless something happens whereby Cohen's spell on some of the leading trustees will be broken it is useless for me to work in the Center. I am simply wasting my time and my energy for a lot of people who are spiritually and Jewishly beyond redemption. I do not mean to say that any one is theoretically beyond redemption, but speaking practically a good many of these prosperous Jews are too far gone to be shaken out of their spiritual self-complacency by methods such as I am able to employ. They need a man of deep spiritual nature ready to martyrize himself and his family. Such a one might be able to wring their hearts which seem to be made of flint.

T Rabbi Solomon Goldman of Cleveland visited me this morning. 7

He graduated from the Seminary about four or five years ago. As a student he found my general approach to the problem of Judaism helpful to him and ever since then has been a zealous advocate of mine. He is at present occupant of an important pulpit in Cleveland where he has

built up quite a following. He has his troubles but seems to be able to hold his own.

In the same city where he is rabbi there is a young man of about 30 - a Rabbi Jung who was imported from England. He is credited with having a good knowledge of Talmud Poskim and a general education as well. But having no capacity to think he is genuinely Orthodox. He professes to believe in the literal truth of the Torah having come from Heaven in the manner described in Exodus. This Rabbi Jung wrote an article in the Jewish Forum of last month entitled Reform, Orthodox and Kaplanism in which he denounces me as an Epikur^{os} though he gave me credit for at least being honest. Typical of that man's point of view is the following which he told Goldman: "I would rather have America~~x~~ with a mikvah than Palestine without a Mikvah." His main interest, Goldman tells me, is to institute a Mikvah in Cleveland,

* * *

Monday, May 9, ~~1961~~ 1921

The following five passages from "The Religion of All Good Men" by Garrod p. 200 sums up my attitude toward Judaism. "Religious progress is determined by the interpretation which each succeeding generation gives to the law delivered to it by the generation which went before. He who fetters the freedom of this interpretation is fighting against Religion and against God. The true interpretation of the law is that put upon it by the Spirit, 'the Holy Spirit', which is the free Spirit, 'the Spirit of God indwelling in good men.'"

Having been under a mental strain these last few days I was unable to deliver the sermon on "Society and the Individual" last Sabbath and to attend to my work at the Institute. Last night I was present at the celebration of Philip Weinstein's silver wedding anniversary. Part of the strain under which I labored yesterday was due

due to my having to overcome the mental resistance which I naturally felt toward attending the affair. It seems to have required at least two days' effort on my part to work myself into a mood sufficiently charitable to be able to deliver the little address at the opening of the festivities. I have learned enough from my general reading to realize that a puritannical and narrow moralist attitude toward people who are after all in the grip of a social system far beyond their control is not becoming to one who really aspires to serve mankind. Yet I am thankful for the mental resistance in me which renders my charity toward men of the Weinstein type anything but easy and spontaneous for I would adjudge myself a hypocrite otherwise.

The celebration which took place at the Astor Hotel was attended by a good many members of the Center. Among them were Cohen *Lurie* I made it my business to make peace overtures right there and then. While I am confident that, if, at the annual meeting which will take place on Wednesday the controversy between Cohen and me should be aired I would have no difficulty in getting a large majority of the members to support me, I nevertheless realize that it would be a ~~Pyrrhic~~ ^{Pyrrhic} victory. Not only would the Center suffer, but the Jewish educational undertaking that is still in its initial stages and especially the Seminary and Institute would be made the butt of attack on the part of the ~~Yeshiva~~ ^{Yeshiva} crowd which is lying in wait just for such an opportunity. That crowd represents in this country the survival of what was worst in Mediaevalism. Lately these people have been gathering force through the support of the Travis family, exploiters of natural gas and oil resources in Oklahoma, Texas and Mexico. Once that crowd gets into the saddle, it is all up with Judaism in this country, Judaism will have lost its last chance to function as a vital spiritualizing energy in consonance with the needs and require-

ments of life in this country. It will exist for a while as a galvanized formalism only to drop off in the end into the oblivion of dead cults. God forbend such an outcome.

After the banquet Fischman, Unterberg, Rosalsky, Lamport and myself got into a small room to discuss the possibility of the two sides coming to terms. Cohen had to leave because his doctor advised him not to remain, and his wife was about to make a scene. (She it was who three months ago when the controversy first broke out went around saying that I will be her husband's death if I don't resign.) Rothstein also was unable to attend the improvised meeting we were holding because his wife either took sick or pretended illness.

In the discussion it appeared that the main bone of contention now was the point of view that should predominate in the instruction of the children and the young people at the Center. Fischman said that if he had a daughter going to the Center he would take her away, if she were taught that the Torah was not given by God at Sinai. What he wants then is to have a committee on Education that would safeguard the orthodoxy of the instruction. It took me considerable time to draw this out from him. As soon as I understood that this was his wish I thought it offered an excellent opportunity to bring about peace in the Center. I therefore stated that I would gladly consent to the appointment of such a committee. I hope that I am not compromising with myself, nor with the principle of intellectual honesty by consenting to the appointment of a committee that would most likely render the instruction orthodox. The people know my views and if they are liberal enough to tolerate me, why should I not be liberal enough to tolerate them. After all they have a right to believe a "Thus said the Lord" that is thousands of years old more than a "Thus said the Lord" that is three years old pronounced by a man whom they can see and can hear and know to be just as weak and human as they are. I am sure I am right and that they are wrong. But I am not

their father, and even if I were, I have no right to prevent them from making their mistakes. I am convinced that they are sincere because they are too ignorant to be insincere. Let them try out their method. I am sure they will find out before long that it does not work.

But all this is very petty theorizing. I am afraid we have ~~reckoned~~ reckoned without the host. Cohen is a host in more senses than one. What will he say to this arrangement?

* * * *

Wednesday, May 11, 1921

The meeting of the Board of Trustees called for the special purpose of considering the action to be taken on my request for a leave of absence took place last night. It was the best attended meeting in the last two years and began almost at the minute it was called for. It proved as exciting an experience as I had expected it to be.

Thursday, May 12, 1921

The meeting opened with the report of Judge Rosalsky on behalf of the committee of four that had come to see me last Thursday. What he said in effect was that what had taken place on Wednesday night at the informal discussion of the members proved that this was an inconspicuous time for me to take a leave of absence. His committee, accordingly, decided that I should be asked to withdraw the letter asking leave of absence, and that no discussion of views should take place at the postponed annual meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

Rosal~~sky~~ky was no sooner through with his report than J.H.Cohen fired his first gun. "Let us not beat about the bush. Why veil the issues? Let us discuss this matter in our shirtsleeves. Dr. Kaplan stated clearly some time ago that for three years he tried our way in his work in the Center. Realizing that he did not succeed in accomplishing his purpose, he said he must try a new method. He wants to

give us a new Judaism. We, however, cannot permit ourselves to be experimented with. We are bound by the constitution to be orthodox." He then went on to relate how I at one time said to him that I was not orthodox (or as he put it "unorthodox") and that when he heard that from me he said "^I~~You~~ cannot be your rabbi." This led to the negotiations with Kavar ^{Charles H. Kavar} (See Vol. I, 339,342) What happened to have brought us together again he could not exactly say, as he kept no memoranda and made no written contract with me. But he was under the impression that in accepting the rabbinate of the Center I was pledged to make it 100% Jewish according to the "Din Shulhan Aruch." Last summer, however, I published an article in which I broke completely with Orthodox Judaism and in addition, organized a society whose platform distinctly violates the principles of Orthodox Judaism.

My answer to his charges was as follows:

It was not a new Judaism that I was trying to formulate but on the contrary, that I was doing all in my power to enable traditional Judaism to live. As far as my relations to the Center are concerned I am prepared to uphold the Shulhan Aruch as the code to be followed in our practice inasmuch as we have no other authoritative code to go by. But on the question of orthodoxy, I want it clearly understood that my views are not orthodox, nor do I consider myself bound to uphold orthodoxy in the Center, since there is nothing in the constitution which says that the Center must be Orthodox.

This, however, does not mean that I intend to do anything prejudicial to the orthodoxy of any one in the Center. Nothing is further from my thought than to ram my belief down anybody's throat. If the principal directors of the Center object to having such unorthodox ideas as I hold taught to the young people, they have a perfect right to appoint an Education Committee to supervise the teaching and see to it that it be conducted in the orthodox spirit.

At this stage of the discussion there was every reason to believe that we were soon to arrive at an understanding, when Max Weinstein injected a question that for a long time threatened to make an understanding impossible. His question was this:

"Does this arrangement mean that we are going to have two religions in the Center, one for the children and another for the parents?"

Cohen at first did not see the opening that it offered him to press his point and acting for a moment reasonably he replied,

"You are logical, but wrong."

Weinstein, however, insisted upon having his question answered. Instead of evading it, I felt that I must face it like a man. I therefore, interpreted his question to those present so specifically that there could be no mistake about it and I was prepared for the consequences. I said that what Weinstein meant was that if the teacher in the school would be asked by a young person whether the Red Sea was actually divided as described or not, the teacher would be obliged to say that we must accept the story as narrated in the Torah. On the other hand, when ^I shall ~~I~~ have occasion to speak of that incident, I will say that it could not have taken place as described in the Torah, because such an occurrence is contrary to the laws of nature.

But, I added, realizing fully the logical inconsistency involved in assuming this attitude I nevertheless believe that it is better for the Center to harbor this inconsistency than to be sacrificed to logical consistency. For if either side insist upon having its point of view prevail to its full extent the Center is bound to be wrecked. Holding the unity and integrity of the Center higher than the views of either group, I believed that it was advisable to adopt the compromise suggested.

Thereupon the storm broke. Cohen waking up to the fact that I was not prepared to surrender an iota of my views and that I would not pussyfoot concerning them either, made a brave fight to turn the directors against me. For over two hours I was subjected to a violent fire

of questions and sneers. A. L. Lamport, Landau, Vessel, Hershkowitz, Horowitz took their turns at me, with Cohen keeping up his attack all the time. It was already twelve o'clock.

At this juncture Rothstein stepped in. He had been silent practically up to that time. As I learned later, it was prearranged that he should act as peacemaker and therefore come in with his suggestion only after both sides have had their full say.

"Everything went along beautifully," he began, "until two hours ago when some one had to throw in a question that could not be answered without embarrassing some one. Let us therefore forget what was said during these two hours, and go back to the point that we were then. When we came here we agreed to agree. My principle is that when a man meets you more than half way that you must not repel him. Dr. Kaplan has done his utmost to accede to your wishes. He has consented to the appointment of a committee that should guard the orthodoxy of the teaching. He wants peace. Then why refuse to accept his proposal?" From that point on he put Cohen on the defensive. I saw at once that the tide had turned against him. Rothstein was followed by Rosalsky and Unterberg, both of whom spoke in the same vein as he did. Finally Rosalsky made a motion that I be re-elected as Rabbi. The motion was seconded by Unterberg. Fischman showed signs of refusing to put the motion. I then became insistent that they either reelect me, right there and then, or I will put my case before the annual meeting the day following. J.H.Cohen made an attempt to block the motion on the technical ground that the meeting had not been called for that purpose, but only to consider my letter. His objection was overruled by the general sense of the meeting. A vote was taken. He voted no. Arthur Lamport and Rothstein then bent all their efforts to get him to withdraw his vote, so that the re-election be made unanimous. After a half hour's pleading with him he yielded.

Last night the annual meeting of the entire membership took place. It was the best attended meeting of its kind so far since the Center has been in existence though a good many of the Trustees, wearied out by the discussion of the preceding night, did not come. Fischman announced the decision of the Board. The members seemed satisfied with the outcome of the controversy. In ~~my~~ my address to them I said to them in substance as follows:

I am grateful for the confidence ^{reposed} ~~reposed~~ in me despite the fact that I hold views that are not in accord with those held by some of the leading men in the Center. In re-electing me as Rabbi they did as much toward initiating a new conception of the rabbinate, as they did toward initiating a new conception of the synagogue when they built the Center. The new conception of the rabbi is that he has a right to his own point of view, and must not be expected to be simply the mouthpiece ~~of the idea~~ of his congregation.

I then urged upon them, if they mean to carry the work of the Center to a successful conclusion, to regard the Center as a necessity and not as a luxury. All the activities of the Center would take on new life, the financial problems would be solved, and a new spirit would prevail among them, if they would adopt the attitude that an institution like the Center is essential to their physical, social and intellectual development.

I also touched upon the proposal to organize a Jewish Business Men's Conference - a movement to apply the teachings of Judaism to the problems of business and industry. The initial impulse toward such a movement ought to come from the Center.

From remarks made to me after the meeting by Rosalsky and from the conversation I had today with Fischman I gathered that some of the trustees including Fischman took offense at what I said at the meeting in the opening remarks of the address.

A luncheon meeting took place at ~~Tarx~~ Trotsky's to consider the procedure to be followed at the Conference which is to hear from Weizmann and Mack why they are engaged in the controversy which threatens to injure the Zionist cause in this country. Present were Rottenberg, Unterberg, Semel, Fischman, Benderly, Rosalsky and Sam Lamport. Rottenberg seemed to be entirely prejudiced in favor of Weizmann. I did not take up the cudgel for Mack but I expressed to some extent my belief that the European Zionists seem to be in the wrong. Mr. Lindheim whom I asked yesterday to give me some information as to the organization and constitution of the Zionist machinery, has almost convinced me that the American Zionists are trying to rescue the Zionist movement from the hands of a self appointed oligarchy. The Charter of Keren Hayesod Corporation is in absolute violation of the resolution of the London Conference of last summer. To ask the Jewish people to turn over the moneys collected for the Keren Hayesod to this corporation is nothing but a piece of effrontery. I did not allow myself to go far in discussing the merits of either side because we ^{had} came for the purpose only of deciding the names of people to be invited, place of conference and chairmanship. It was decided that Rosalsky act as chairman. Fortunately Marsahll, who had been asked by Benderly to come to the Conference, refused to take part in it on the ground that he had to make a living and did not as yet belong to the gentlemen of the leisure class. He therefore could not think of attending the meeting which is scheduled for 3 o'clock in the afternoon. This, of course, is only an excuse on his part, since, I understand, his real reason for his refusal is that he does not want to display too much interest in the Zionist movement. I consider his staying away fortunate because it is conduct such as this on his part that will teach Jews of our kind to realize that with all his interest in things Jewish he is after all a stranger to their holiest aspirations. His forte is fighting anti-Semitism, but when it

comes to furthering Judaism he is despite his good intentions, not of us. He is not an American Jew but an American of the Mosaic Faith. But our people have learned to look upon him as a Jewish mentor and inspirer. Never a meeting takes place but his presence is regarded as indispensable. It is only when he will keep away from them in just such moments of need that they will at last learn to be self-reliant. This is why I am pleased with his absence from the conference.

* * *

Monday, May 16, 1921

The following are some of the statements made by J.H. Cohen in the course of the discussion last Tuesday night.

"Once you admit that Tradition is fallible, you deny Tradition."

When Rothstein expressed regret over the latter part of the discussion because, unlike the first part of the evening, the latter part was marked by a good deal of bitterness, Cohen said:

"Gentlemen, it is much better that we had this frank and open discussion. You have heard what Dr. Kaplan stands for. There can be no mistake about it, and if you are satisfied to have him pursue that policy you do so with open eyes."

In describing our former relations to each other he said, ~~xxx~~ "Every time I said the Selichoth I could not help thinking how true the statement that *pinas ynd* . I wanted to kidnap Kaplan for real Judaism."

* * * *

Tuesday, May 17, 1921

"You wrung our hearts every time you spoke on the industrial question. If you had taken my advice to gather around you a sort of cabinet you would have refrained from saying and doing many things that should not have been said or done."

Here Weinstein interposed, "Would you have the rabbi ask

permission from the Board every time he had to preach?"

"I assure you," replied Cohen, "that if the rabbi were to consult his people before he preached, what he said would be taken seriously, which is not the case now."

Last night I attended a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Temporary Organization for Jewish Education at Unterberg's house. It is nearly a year since the handful of communally minded Jews have been ²~~pothening~~ with the problem of organizing a campaign to obtain support for the Jewish elementary training of the thousands of Jewish children who at present get no religious schooling whatever. The real obstacle in the way of such a movement is the apathy toward the need of perpetuating Judaism in this country. The only way one can tell whether such a need is felt is by the sacrifice in money and services that people are prepared to make for the cause. Judging by the response to the appeal for the initial fund to start with \$(\$100,000) one has a right to conclude that even among that handful the interest in Judaism is little more than lukewarm.

It is natural, however, under circumstances such as these to seek out imaginary difficulties in order to find an excuse for not going ahead with the work, though their better selves may have impelled them to see that work done. The first difficulty is the present business depression. It is true that these people have not been making as much money as usual, but so far as their living expenses are concerned, which range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and even more per annum, not a single luxury, I am told, is omitted.

Anoter difficulty that was conjured up and made the subject of incessant discussion has been the uncertainty as to the attitude that would be taken by the Federation of Philanthropic societies. The initiators of this undertaking are the members of the Board of School Aid, an

organization representing the seven Talmud Torahs at present affiliated with the Federation. Negotiations were carried on at different times with little result. Finally a committee consisting of Unterberg, Magnes, Benderly, and Rosalsky met a committee of the Federation consisting of Arthur Lehman, Judge Irving Lehman and Goldman. The Federation committee was primarily interested in seeing to it that the Talmud Torahs at present affiliated would violate none of the laws that have to be lived up to by institutions that get support from Federation. As far as the undertaking itself was concerned Judge Lehman and Goldman expressed themselves as very sympathetic but sceptical as to whether there was any possibility of success. They pointed to the failure of the same group of people to get the necessary support for the Seminary and Teachers Institute despite their having pledged themselves to do so. These sympathetic Jewish assimilationists are symptomatic, to my mind, of a fatal malady in the Jewish body politic. That men of that type should deliberately assume that ~~that the future of Jewish education~~ Jewish education can not be fostered in this country augurs sadly for the future of Judaism in the Diaspora. The reference to the failure of our group to make good their promises to the Seminary was not included in Magnes' report to our meeting, but was brought out later incidentally in the course of the discussion.

When the chairman, Mr. Unterberg asked Weiner who is chairman of the membership committee, to report on the result of his interview with the people assigned to him for the purpose of getting them to subscribe to the initial fund of \$100,000 for the next two years, Weiner stated that a number of people had said to him that they would contribute provided some of the old type "Rabbanim" were represented on the executive committee. Suspecting that what he had in mind was that my presence on the committee afforded some people an excuse for not contributing, I reiterated what I had stated many times before that the organization ought to consist of "Baale Batim" only and that professionals like Magnes, Benderly and myself ought to act only in an advisory capacity,

attending the meetings only at rare intervals. This pleased Weiner and Fischman.

I am beginning to realize already what an anomalous position I am occupying in the group of people with whom I have been attempting to work the last ten years. Until recently when my views were unknown to them, I was an asset to them, but a hypocrite in my own eyes. Now that I am known as holding views that are absolutely unorthodox I can be of no service to them. I make no attempt whatever to sail under false colors. The arrangement at the Center was suggested by me not because I actually believe it is workable. I am human and have sufficient pride not to allow Cohen and Fischman to compel me to resign. I want to resign from the Center, but I don't want anybody to make me do it.

It looks as though I can no longer expect to find my spiritual haven with the class of our people I have been associated with ever since I have been in the ministry. I shall have to break with them sooner or later. I am therefore laying my plans to do so with as little a jolt or shock as possible to all concerned.

I went to see Stephen S. Wise today about my becoming a member of the faculty in the rabbinical school which he is on the point of establishing. I spoke to him about this matter a year ago. He encouraged me very strongly but I was still hoping that possibly I might work out my spiritual destiny in the Center and the Seminary. But both of these institutions have wronged me, especially the Seminary. The coldness and hauteur of the faculty, the attack made upon me by Adler on Jan 16 at the convention of the United Synagogue, Ginzberg's ^{unwarranted} ~~unwarranted~~ assault the next day, all this in spite of my utmost endeavor to help the Seminary morally and financially have led me to conclude that I must cut away from my moorings.

